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The Life of Rev. James
Hervey, M.A., rector of







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THE LIFE

OF

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REV. JAMES HERVEY, M.A.

RECTOR OF WESTON-FAVEL.

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L I F E
OF THE
REV. JAMES HERVEY.

HIS BIRTH, EDUCATION, AND CONVERSION.

THIS eminent Christian, and excellent minister, was born February 26, 1713, at Hardingstone, near Northampton, England, his father being then minister of Collingtree in that neighbourhood. He received his first instruction from his mother, who taught him to read. Under her tuition he continued till he was seven years of age, when he was sent to the grammar school of Northampton, where he remained till he was seventeen, and learned the Latin and Greek languages, in which his genius and memory would have enabled him to make a much greater progress, if it had not been prevented by his schoolmaster, who would not suffer him, nor any of his scholars, to learn faster than his own son.

In 1731 he was sent to Oxford, where he resided several years. The first two or three years of his residence at this university were not distinguished by that diligent application to study for which he was afterwards eminent. Mr. Ryland says, "While at the university, he was much at a loss for want of a faithful friend to direct him to proper studies: he was ordered, in a very careless

manner, to read such and such books, which were altogether unsuitable to his taste, and, in a high degree, afforded matter of disgust and discouragement. At last, by the peculiar agency of Providence, he was led to read Abbé de Pluche's *Nature Displayed*, well known by the title *Spectacle de la Nature*. The intrinsic beauty of the piece allured his imagination and passions; and when he had made an entrance into the work, he read with incessant eagerness, improvement and pleasure. This work cherished his natural passion for knowledge. He added Dr. Derham's *Astro-Theology*: this book assisted him in his first learned ideas of the starry heavens, and led him into views of the whole Newtonian system of philosophy. His conceptions were further aided by Ray's *Wisdom of God in Creation*, and Dr. Derham's *Demonstration of the Being and attributes of God*, in his *Physico-Theology*. To these books he added Keil's *Anatomy*, which he studied with such incessant attention, and perpetual reviews, as to make himself acquainted with the structure of the human body better than any man I ever knew. He went on to read Mr. Spence's *Five Dialogues on Pope's Translation of Homer*, which, he often assured me, gave him a greater insight into the nature and beauty of composition than any author he ever read. By the most accurate digestion of these authors in his understanding, and a continued contemplation of the book of nature, he advanced his mind, and polished his genius in the line of science."

In 1733, becoming acquainted with some fellow-students,* who began to distinguish themselves by their serious impressions of religion, and their zeal

* Messrs. Wesley, Morgan, Ingham, and Whitefield.

to promote it, he was engaged in a strict attention to piety and usefulness. At this time he received the communion every Sabbath, and visited the sick and the prisoners in the jail: we find him also reading to poor people, who had not the advantage of knowing letters. He speaks of this to a friend: "I employ every day an hour or more, which I think is as much time as I can spare from my studies, with some well-inclined people of the poorer sort; we read Henry on the Holy Scriptures, and pray together: there is one set in one part of the city, and another in another; I meet at a neighbour's house."

At this time a happy friendship commenced between Mr. Hervey, while at home, and Mr. Risdon Darracot, a student under Dr. Doddridge: two souls eminently congenial for warm piety and usefulness. At a religious man's house, who belonged to Dr. Doddridge's church, but was in the parish of Weston-Favel, they had their first interview. Of this Darracot says, "Though now almost nineteen years ago, I retain a delightful impression of our converse then." They continued to correspond through life.

While at college, he often wrote to his relations, particularly to one of his sisters. Besides much good advice, he says, "I have frequently recollected, and, as it were, acted over again, the many pleasant hours we have spent together in reading holy and edifying works, or discoursing on pious and useful subjects." Mr. Hervey being a pupil of Mr. John Wesley at this time, he gratefully acknowledges his kindness to him in the following words: "I heartily thank you, as for all other favours, so especially for teaching me Hebrew. I have cultivated this study, according to your advice. I can never forget that tender-hearted and

generous Fellow of Lincoln, who condescended to take such compassionate notice of a poor undergraduate, whom almost every body contemned, and no man cared for my soul." The practice of Wesley through life, was to rise very early in the morning; and in this he was imitated by his amiable pupil, who was often seen at his studies when the other members of the college were retiring to rest.

He was ordained a deacon, by Dr. Potter, bishop of Oxford, September 14, 1736; and immediately afterwards he gave up an exhibition he had from his college of twenty pounds a year: his reason for which was, that he thought it unjust to retain what another student might stand in need of.

It appears, from his first letters, that in his early youth he showed a serious turn of mind; but several of these speak a language very different from those truths for which he was afterwards so able and zealous an advocate; the fact is, he was then an entire stranger to the doctrine of justification by faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ, and had strong prepossessions against it. An intimate friend of Mr. Hervey has told the public,* (and he most likely received the information from himself,) that till he was eighteen he had no serious impressions of religion, and afterwards, till he was twenty-seven, his views of divine truth were dark, indistinct, and confused. In this way he preached for several years.

Mr. Ryland says, "All this time was spent in reading improper books, trusting to his own virtue and righteousness for justification, and without the joys of God's salvation. He had no friend in all the world to recommend to him the best books—no friend to explain to him the true sense and

* Rev. John Ryland, late of Northampton,

meaning of the Holy Scriptures. All his external observances, and his attempts to practise virtue, had a tendency to build up a strong barrier between Christ and his soul. During part of this period, he possessed what he afterwards reckoned a rich treasure of gospel-truth, ‘Marshall on Sanctification;’ but he let it lie by in his study, without the least attention, or so much as once reading it, till at last the providence and grace of God roused him to read this treatise, which was so much blessed to him. Mr. Hervey was left to make his own way in religious knowledge, and for a long time that way was in the dark: at last, in 1741, Jenks on Submission to Christ’s Righteousness, and Rawlin on Justification, were put into his hand by Divine Providence. These were the books which, under the influence of the Spirit of God, first directed his apprehensions to Christ’s righteousness. Marshall on Sanctification first led him to the great spring and means of gospel holiness. Mr. Thomas Hall on Perseverance, in the Lime Street Lectures, first led him into the comfort of that doctrine. He acknowledged to the Rev. Moses Brown, that Zimmerman on the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ, was among the first books that led him to have a clear light and understanding of the gospel, and had been blessed to his experiencing true established rest in his soul. He was also much assisted in his researches into evangelical truth by Boston’s Fourfold State of Man, and Witsius on the Covenants. Of this author he says, “I cannot but lament it, as one of my greatest losses, that I was not sooner acquainted with this most excellent author, all whose works have such a delicacy of composition, and such a sweet savour of holiness, that I know not any comparison more proper to represent their true character, than the golden pot which

had manna, and was outwardly bright with burnished gold, inwardly rich with heavenly food." While he perused these treatises, he found many expressions contrary to his pre-conceived and legal ideas, being quite unaccustomed, as he says, to the joyful sound of grace and salvation, infinitely rich grace, and perfectly free salvation, they seemed strange language to him: but he constantly read on, till, under a divine blessing, he knew the grace of God in truth; and examining and explaining these expressions, found them to coincide entirely with the truth as it is in Jesus.

The state of Mr. Hervey's mind at this time is illustrated by the following interesting anecdote: In the parish where Mr. Hervey preached, there resided a ploughman, who usually attended the ministry of Dr. Doddridge, and who was well informed in the doctrines of grace. Mr. Hervey being advised by his physician, for the benefit of his health, to follow the plough, in order to smell the fresh earth, frequently accompanied this ploughman in his rural employment. Mr. Hervey understanding the ploughman was a serious person, said to him one morning, "What do you think is the hardest thing in religion?" To which he replied, "I am a poor illiterate man, and you, Sir, are a minister; I beg leave to return the question." Then said Mr. Hervey, "I think the hardest thing is to deny sinful self," grounding his opinion on that solemn admonition of our Lord, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself." "I argued," says Mr. Hervey, "upon the import and extent of the duty, showing that merely to forbear the infamous action is little, we must deny admittance, deny entertainment, at least, to the evil imagination, and quench even the enkindling spark of irregular desire." In this way I shot my random bolt.

The ploughman replied, "There is another instance of self-denial, to which the injunction extends, which is of great moment, and the hardest thing in religion, and that is, to deny *righteous* self. You know I do not come to hear you preach, but go, every Sabbath, with my family, to Northampton, to hear Dr. Doddridge. We rise early in the morning, and have prayers before we set out, in which I find pleasure; walking there and back I find pleasure; under the sermon I find pleasure; when at the Lord's table I find pleasure; we read a portion of the Scriptures and go to prayers in the evening, and find pleasure; but, to this moment I find it the hardest thing to deny righteous self; I mean the renouncing of our own strength, and of our own righteousness, not leaning on that for holiness, nor relying on this for justification." In repeating the story to a friend, Mr. Hervey observed, "I then hated the righteousness of Christ; I looked at the man with astonishment and disdain, and thought him an old fool, and wondered at, what I then fancied, the motley mixture of piety and oddity in his notions. I have since clearly seen who was the fool—not the wise old Christian, but the proud James Hervey; I now discern sense, solidity, and truth in his observations."

During this period of his life, Mr. Whitefield corresponded with him. The following letter, while it exhibits that good man's concern for him, makes Mr. Hervey's principles and views also evident: "I long to have my dear friend come forth and preach the truth as it is in Jesus; not a righteousness or inward holiness of our own, whereby we make ourselves meet, but the righteousness of another, even the Lord our righteousness; upon the imputation and apprehending of which by faith, we shall be made meet by his Holy Spirit to live

with and enjoy God. Dear Mr. Hervey, it is an excellent thing to be convinced of the freeness and riches of God's grace in Christ Jesus; it is sweet to know and preach that Christ justifies the ungodly, and that all good works are not so much as partly the cause, but the effect of our justification before God. Till convinced of these truths, you must own free-will in man, which is directly contrary to the Holy Scriptures, and the articles of our church. Let me advise dear Mr. Hervey, laying aside all prejudice, to read and pray over St. Paul's epistles to the Romans and Galatians, and then let him tell me what he thinks of this doctrine. Most of our old friends are now happily enlightened; God sets his seal to such preaching in an extraordinary manner, and I am persuaded the gates of hell will never be able to prevail against it. O that dear Mr. Hervey would also join with us! O that the Lord would open his eyes to behold aright this mystery of godliness! How would it rejoice my heart! how would it comfort his own soul! He would no longer groan under a spirit of bondage; no, he would be brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God."* At this time it is evident Mr. Hervey was seeking salvation, but he sought it as it were by the works of the law. One of his leading errors then was, that he formed low, scanty, inadequate apprehensions of the law of God; from this unavoidably followed a disesteem of imputed righteousness, a conceit of personal

* Whitefield's Collection of Letters, Let. 100, dated 1739. Mr. Hervey seems to have been peculiarly endeared to this good man: in an after period, Mr. Whitefield says of him, "The author of the Meditations is my old friend; a most heavenly-minded creature, who is contented with a small pittance, and gives all that he has to the poor."

qualifications, a spirit of legal bondage, and a tincture of Pharisaical pride. He conceived faith to be no more than a mere believing of promises if he did well, and of threatenings if he did ill. He wished for a salvation to be bestowed upon some sincere, pious, and worthy person, and was distressed because he could not find himself of that number. 'To use his own words, when he felt he was deplorably deficient in duty, he would comfort himself with saying, "Soul, thy God only requires sincere obedience, and perhaps to-morrow may be more abundant in acts of holiness." When overcome by sin, he would call to mind his righteous deeds, and so think to commute with divine justice, and quit scores for his offences by his duties. In order to be reconciled to God, or to ease his conscience, he would promise stricter watchfulness, more alms, and renewed fastings: overlooking entirely the active obedience of our Redeemer, he fondly imagined that, through the death of Christ, he might have pardon of his sins, and could, by his own doings, secure eternal life.

For some time, letters from the above correspondent were disregarded, or treated with a stubborn silence; but at length, by these and other means, a saving change took place in Mr. Hervey. He says, "The two great commandments, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, made the first awakening impression on my heart. Amazing! thought I; are these commands of God as obligatory as the prohibition of adultery, or the observation of the Sabbath? 'Then has my whole life been a continued act of disobedience; not a day, nor an hour, in which I have performed my duty. 'This conviction," says he, "struck me as the handwriting upon the wall struck the presumptuous mo-

narch. It pursued me, as Saul pursued the Christians, not only to my own house, but to distant cities, nor ever gave up the great controversy, till, under the influences of the Spirit, it brought me weary and heavy laden to Jesus Christ." God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined into his heart, to give him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

This illumination of his mind was not that clear but inefficacious apprehension of evangelical truth, in which, as in the moonshine of a frosty night, much may be seen but nothing grows; it was like that produced by the sun's light, warm and fructifying. Under this illumination he saw, that any sinner, whatsoever he be, has sufficient warrant immediately to believe in, or depend on, Jesus Christ for everlasting life. Under the influence of divine grace, he believed the truth of the report, and the sufficiency of Christ alone: he believed the divine encouragement, that he should be saved in this way: he trusted with confidence his everlasting concerns on the person, finished work, and grace of Christ. Accordingly, in this sense, and in this sense only, he pleads, in his writings, for a particular application of Jesus and his fulness, offered to sinners in general and indefinite terms. In this sense he uses the terms "for me, in my stead," as respecting the obedience and death of Christ. Neither in his books, nor in his experience, did he consider his trust as in the least entitling him to everlasting life; but he considered rather that he had a Saviour and everlasting life given to him, as a sinner, to trust and depend upon. He did not wish to work himself up to this trust or confidence, as the condition of being saved; but considered that he had a sure foundation, whereon

he might constantly depend for salvation, without fear of disappointment, by this assured faith.

He by no means set aside holiness of heart and life, as has been alleged; so far from it, that he relied on Jesus for this precious gift, and esteemed him as made of God to him, sanctification. Under the influence of this assured confidence, he sought to be renewed in his whole man after the pattern of Christ; and coveted earnestly to have the same mind in him as was in his Saviour and Master.

At this change Mr. Hervey's religious friends rejoiced, and none more than Mr. Whitefield. He says to a friend, "The prospect is promising; many students at Oxford are earnestly learning Christ.—Dear Mr. Hervey, whose loving and catholic heart you know, hath learned and preached Christ."

We are happy to give, in Mr. Hervey's own words, a particular account of the change of his views and heart into a most scriptural and evangelical mould. In a letter to Mr. Whitefield on this subject, he says, "I own, with shame and sorrow, that I have been a blind leader of the blind; my tongue and my pen have perverted the good ways of the Lord, and have darkened the glory of redeeming merit and sovereign grace. I have dared to invade the glories of an all-sufficient Saviour, and to pluck the crown off his head. My writings and discourses have derogated from the honours, the everlasting and incommunicable honours, of Jesus; they presumed to give works a share in the redemption and recovery of a lost sinner; they have placed these filthy rags upon the throne of the Lamb, and by that means have debased the Saviour, and exalted the sinner. But I trust the divine truth begins to dawn upon the soul. O may

it, like the rising sun, shine more and more, till the day break in all its brightness, and the shadows flee away! Now, was I possessed of all the righteous acts that have made saints and martyrs famous in all generations; could they be transferred to me, and might I call them all my own, I would renounce them all that I might win Christ. I would not dare to appear before the burning eye of God with such straw and stubble; no, I would long to be clothed in a Mediator's righteousness, and ascribe all my salvation to the most unmerited and freest grace."

In another letter to the same person he writes—"You are pleased to ask, how the Holy Ghost convinced me of self-righteousness, and drove me out of my false rest? Indeed, Sir, I cannot tell; the light was not instantaneous, but gradual; it did not flash upon my soul, but arose like the dawning of the day. A little book, by Jenks, upon Submission to the Righteousness of God, was made serviceable to me. Your journals, Dear Sir, and sermons, especially that sweet sermon upon "What think ye of Christ?" were a means of bringing me to the knowledge of the truth; and another piece has been also very precious eye-salve to my dim and clouded understanding, I mean "Marshall's Gospel Mystery of Sanctification." These, blessed be He who is a light to them that sit in darkness! have in some degree convinced me of my former errors. I now begin to see I have been labouring in the fire, and wearying myself for very vanity, while I have attempted to establish my own righteousness. I trusted I knew not what, while I have trusted in some imaginary good deeds of my own; these are no hiding-place from the storm, they are a refuge of lies. If I had the meekness of Moses, and the patience of Job,

the zeal of Paul, and the love of John, I durst not advance the least plea to eternal life on this footing: but as for my own beggarly performances and wretched righteousness, O gracious, adorable Emmanuel, I am ashamed, I am grieved, that I should thrust them into the place of thy divine, thy inconceivably precious obedience! My schemes are altered; I now desire to work in my blessed Master's service, not *for*, but *from*, life and salvation. I would study to please him in righteousness and holiness all the days of my life. I seek this blessing of holiness, not as a condition, but as a part, a choice and inestimable part, of that complete salvation which Jesus hath purchased for me."

Formerly, through his ignorance of the gospel, and the legal temper of his mind, he had discarded the active obedience of Christ, now he believed this glorious doctrine, and rested on it as a most invaluable privilege. So he says, "My faith is, that our Lord's obedience to the moral law, in professed submission to its authority, and in exact conformity to its precepts; his performance of all holy duties, and his exercise of all heavenly graces; that all this is a most essential and distinguished part of his merit; that this is of higher dignity and greater value than the whole world, and all the righteousness in it; that the divine law is hereby more signally honoured, than it could have been honoured by the uninterrupted obedience of Adam and all his posterity; that God's justice, holiness and truth, receive greater glory from these unparalleled acts of duty, than from the services of angels and men, in their several wonderful orders; that this active righteousness, together with his most meritorious sufferings, are the ground and cause of my acceptance with God, are the very thing which procures and effects my justification, making me not barely

acquitted from guilt, but truly righteous, yea, perfectly righteous, and that before the God of infinite penetration and purity." This view of things, he says, was to him incomparably magnificent, and inexpressibly comfortable.

Mr. Hervey found it a hard task for such a mind as his, long and eminently leavened with ignorance and legal pride, to come to Christ divested of every recommendatlon but that of extreme wretchedness, to receive from the hand of unmerited benignity the free riches of evangelical grace. On this subject he would relate and apply the following anecdote of Dr. Cheyne, an English physician; to one consulting him about the recovery of his health, the Doctor replied, "You are not bad enough for me." As none but the deeply disordered would submit to Cheyne's mortifying prescriptions, in like manner Mr. Hervey found that none but the weary and heavy laden would come to Jehovah our righteousness, or relish the doctrine of grace, which represents the Redeemer as the meridian sun, and all the sons of Adam as glow-worms of the night.

In the light of the glory of God, he now viewed the gospel as a choice blessing, setting an open door, not for believers to come up to a certain standard, but for sinners to trust in the Lord Jesus immediately, without waiting for any distinguishing reason in themselves. He now saw, that no conditions or performances are to be placed between the sinner and the Saviour; but the first step of practical religion is to trust Christ alone, as given us in the word of grace.

These views, attended with Almighty grace, brought down in him every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and brought into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

This remarkable change appeared in his sermons. Empty legal harangues no longer disgraced his pulpit. He now discoursed of grace reigning, through righteousness, unto an eternal life of holiness and happiness. This he did at first more darkly; but afterwards with greater clearness, in proportion to his growing knowledge and experience of the truth as it is in Jesus.

Then he began to be a true evangelical preacher. Christ crucified, the foundation of the sinner's hope; Christ on the throne, the lawgiver of the redeemed; Christ, by his word and Spirit in the heart, the believer's life; Christ in glory, the elevating object of the saint's expectation and desire; these, and the subjects connected with them in the plan of redemption, were now his loved and chosen themes. His sermons, under the divine blessing, made the grace of God sweet, salvation through Christ acceptable, sin hateful, and strict holiness amiable, to the souls of his people.

To his good friend Whitefield, who used every proper method he could think of to change his views, and whose letters he once refused to answer, he now wrote: "Dear Sir, cease not to pray for me, desist not to counsel me, since I perceive you cannot forbear to love me." After this change, he made heart religion his business through life. In a letter to a friend he has these words:—"What I wrote concerning a firm faith in God's most precious promises, a humble trust that we are the objects of his tender love, is what I desire to feel, rather than what I experience; they are considerations with which I would ply my heart, in the hope that they may be the happy means of making me strong in faith, and enable me thereby to give glory to God. All my aim, all my desire is, to quicken in my heart the seeds of practical faith and vital

holiness. I will, on your encouragement, go on with my book, in my slow way, happy if my own heart may be impressed with the evangelical truths, even though they should reach, as handled by this pen, no further. That comfortable Scripture has been often-times a cordial to my heart, 'The Lord delighteth in them that fear him, and put their trust in his mercy. How often have I read, that to make me rich, the Lord of all things had not where to lay his head! To obtain joy and gladness for me, the Prince of peace was sorrowful, sorrowful even unto death! To cleanse me from all guilt, to present me without spot or blemish before the throne, the everlasting Son of God was content to spill the last drop of his blood! How often have I read all this, and yet continued unaffected and stupidly insensible! May my heart be smitten with remorse, and overwhelmed with shame, for my vile, vile ingratitude, to so divinely compassionate a Saviour; and so much the more, as I am assured of his readiness to forgive all my provocations, and to love me as freely as if I had never sinned."

When he received letters, which he thought would flatter the vanity of his mind, he would not look at them a second time. The same disposition of mind will appear in the following extract;—"I am so far from carrying on my versifying designs, that I heartily wish I had never conceived any; that those lines I sent to — had never been made, or I had never heard them commended. Pride and vanity are foolish and unreasonable in dust and ashes, and, what is worse, odious and detestable before infinite perfection and infinite power, Oh! let you and I then dread whatever may administer fuel to these worst of tempers, more than the poison of asps, or the pestilence that walketh in darkness. Let us pray against seeking, desiring,

or taking pleasure in the honour that cometh of men; and if, at any time, the flattering tongue, that snare of death, shall overtake us, let us instantly fly to our Saviour, and complain unto our God; then let us remember, and remembering let us acknowledge, that we are nothing, have nothing, and deserve nothing, but shame and contempt, but misery and punishment."

He also evidenced a detestation of every thing that he thought tended to pollute the heart. So he writes of the author of "*The Fairy Queen*," in the following terms:—"He is, in fancy, superior to every poet, yet so luscious in some of his representations, I have occasionally dipped into, that it is impossible, for me at least, to advert to them without catching the infection. His pictures of this sort are drawn with a good design; he makes his heroes victors over the soft allurements; but I believe few minds are so case-hardened against sensual pleasures, as not to receive disadvantageous impressions. I am therefore determined never to look into it again, never to gather the honey of poetry from the briers of contamination. 'Flee temptation,' is the advice of an inspired apostle, and I will pay the due respect to it."

He also seems to have kept a diary, wherein he minuted down his sins of omission and commission, took notice of the manner in which his time was spent, of the strain of his discourse, and of the frame of his heart in religious duties. These interesting memoirs he often reviewed. This method of keeping a diary he found the means of teaching him the knowledge of himself, and of disposing him to prayer, and other duties.

After this change of his sentiments and heart, Mr. Hervey met with a considerable share of reproach, but was encouraged by the Master he

served, and by the friends to the same cause of grace and holiness.

After Mr. Hervey's change of sentiment, he was earnestly importuned by some friends, particularly by Mr. Whitefield, to become an itinerant; besides many solicitations to himself, Mr. W., knowing that the success of the gospel was the joy of Mr. Hervey's heart, writes to a mutual friend—"I have been in eight Welsh counties; I think we have not had one dry meeting. Had my dear Mr. Hervey been there to have seen the simplicity of so many dear saints, I am persuaded he would have said, 'Let my soul be with the Methodists.'" The weakness of Mr. Hervey's constitution, and, perhaps, other considerations, prevented his falling in with the above proposal. His principal talent seems to have consisted in study and writing; this he employed to good purpose; in the mean time, he gave abundant encouragement to those of his friends who were engaged in itinerant services.

At the time when Mr. Hervey was called to the knowledge of the truth, it was much under a veil in the church whereof he was a member. To use the words of one of her sons—"At that time, a minister of the Church of England, who ventured to maintain her articles and homilies in doctrine, and who supported them in fact by a holy practice, was a kind of prodigy, and met with nothing but censure, persecution, and hard names, from all ranks and sorts of men. Our pulpits resounded with morality, deduced from the principles of nature, and the fitness of things, with no relation to Christ or the Holy Ghost; all which the heathen philosophers have insisted on, and with perhaps more than modern ingenuity, and in consequence of this our streets have resounded with heathen immorality."

The same was the case with many among the

dissenters. The Rev. Mr. Barker, in a letter to Dr. Doddridge, says, "The defection of our younger ministers I greatly lament: the dissenting interest is not like itself; I hardly know it. I knew the time when I had no doubt into whatever place among dissenters I went, but that my heart would be warmed and comforted, and my edification promoted; now I hear prayers and sermons which I neither relish nor understand. Evangelical truth and duty are quite old fashioned; from many pulpits one's ears are so dinned with reason, the great law of reason, the eternal law of reason, that it is enough to put one out of conceit with the chief excellency of our nature, because it is idolized, and even deified." In this unhappy time, Mr. Hervey, with some other excellent men, were raised up to explain and defend the genuine gospel. It is also remarkable, that some years before, the same doctrine had been revived in Scotland by occasion of a controversy about a book, entitled, "The Marrow of Modern Divinity," and by the excellent sermons and writings of Messrs. Boston, Erskines, &c. These found their way into England, and were eminently useful to Mr. Hervey, while his works have been greatly blessed for promoting the interests of evangelical truth both in England and Scotland.

HIS RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES.

To promote faith and holiness, was, next to the glory of God, the great end of Mr. Hervey's ministrations. Of the nature of both, he entertained the most just views. In his view, all revealed truth ought to be highly valued and believed; but he judged, that the special subject of the gospel was Christ; and that preaching Christ, according

to the direction of the word of God, was preaching the gospel. To exhibit Christ, our Saviour and our Lord, made of God to sinful men, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, was with Mr. Hervey the sum of the gospel. He apprehended gospel declarations were made in a form that warrants every person, merely in the character of a guilty undone sinner, to depend on Christ alone for complete salvation, and to rest assured, that a gracious, faithful God, will be to him, and do to him, all that is imported in these general declarations, which testify the grace of God unto mankind, as sinners, of whom he is one. He also considered, that these declarations do not only constitute a sinner's warrant to possess the Saviour and eternal life, but oblige him, as his bounden duty, to judge them faithful sayings, and to depend upon them, as the sufficient, the only ground of his sure and undeceiving hope.

The definition of faith, given in Theron and Aspasio, Let. 10, Mr. Hervey apprehended might, at first view, dissatisfy and alarm even some pious people, including, as they apprehended, too great a degree of assurance: But, says he, "If they please to take it in *connection* with the explanation and adjustment, delivered in the 16th Dialogue, I hope all cause of disapprobation or surprise will vanish. I flatter myself, that the sentiment will be found, not only comfortable to the sinner, but agreeable to Scripture, and truly unexceptionable, as well as highly desirable." He further says, "*Christ died for me*, seems to be the faith preached and taught by the apostles." "The life I live in the flesh, the life of holiness, usefulness, and comfort, I live by the faith of the Son of God." What this faith is, he explains in the next sentence. "By viewing the Son of God as loving me, and giving himself

for me." In another private letter, writing of the Thessalonians receiving the gospel, he remarks: "Receiving the gospel—What is meant by that expression? Believing that the apostles were no impostors, that Christ was the true Messiah? This, and abundantly more, I apprehend, it implies; that Christ died, not for sins only in general, but for our sins in particular: that he bore all their iniquities, in his own bleeding body and agonizing soul, on the accursed tree: that all their crimes being fully expiated, the most rigorous justice would not demand double payment; and, consequently, that there remaineth no condemnation for them.* This is the glad tidings, to which they not only attended, and assented with a speculative assent, but with a personal application of it, each to his own particular case. I shall subjoin further on this head, (says Mr. Hervey,) what I take to be a very accurate explication of the apostle's celebrated definition of faith. 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen;' that is, putting us into a kind of present possession of the promises, and setting divine grace before the mind, in all the light and power of demonstration."

* The above sentiment, which Mr. Hervey had borrowed from the writings of the Reformers, and afterwards qualified in his last amendments, is expressed by the judicious Boston, and other modern divines, in the following words:—"The gospel is the report of a crucified Christ, made over to sinners, as the device of heaven for their salvation. It is proclaimed by the authority of heaven, that Christ has died, and by his death purchased life and salvation for lost children of Adam, and that they, and every one of them, may have free access to him. Faith trusting this report as true and good, the soul concludes "the Saviour is mine," and leans on him for all the purchase of his death, for life and salvation to itself in particular."—*Boston's Sermons on Isa. liii 1.*

He always acknowledged that those to whom the gospel is made effectual, believe the truth of this report, and of the sufficiency of Christ alone, before there can be any acts of receiving or appropriating; but he viewed the idea of appropriation as entering into the nature of faith, and says of it, "To appropriate, in the theological sense, is to take home the grace of God, which lies in the common indefinite grant of the gospel. Is Christ the treasure hid in the field? To appropriate this treasure, is to receive and use it as our own portion. Is Christ the balm of Gilead, full of saving health? To appropriate this balm, is to take and apply it for the recovery of our own souls; and without such an appropriation, how can we be enriched by the former, or healed by the latter?"

He also apprehended, that a believer, in the exercise of faith, believes something with reference to his own salvation, upon the ground of God's faithfulness in the promise, which is, that now Christ is and will be a Saviour to him; that whatsoever he did for the redemption of mankind, he did it for him; and that he shall have eternal life by him. This appropriation, he apprehended not to arise from any supposition that God hath chosen us to salvation, or that Christ died with a design to redeem us, or as grounded on any marks and evidences of a gracious work within us, nor that it implied a persuasion that we are at the time in actual possession of Christ and salvation. But the appropriation Mr. Hervey contended for, was one entirely founded upon the record of God; an echo to the divine testimony; a persuasion that God really giveth us, in particular, sufficient and desirable salvation, to be enjoyed in Christ; and that, viewing it in this light, we believe in God, that it shall be to us guilty sinners, even as it is told us in these decla-

rations which reveal divine favour to the ungodly. To this purpose, also, is the following note appended to Theron and Aspasio:—"We no where suppose, that a freedom from all fears, or a superiority to all doubts, is included in the nature of faith; we only affirm, that an appropriating persuasion of salvation, by Christ alone, is that confidence which properly answers to the divine report and grant of a Saviour, to be believed on for life everlasting. This persuasion or assurance may be incumbered with doubts, and may conflict with fears; but still it is assurance, real assurance, and proves itself to be such, by opposing and struggling with the contrary principle." He illustrates this by a pleasing similitude:—"In some fruitful family, you may see one child in the leading strings, another able to walk by itself, a third come home from the school of literature: observe their speech; one lisps a few broken sentences, another talks intelligibly, but very incorrectly; the last has learned to express himself with tolerable propriety; yet each speaks the same language, notwithstanding the various degrees of fluency in their utterance or propriety of diction. So faith always speaks one and the same uniform language, whether she lisps or stammers; whether she whispers in faint accents, or raises her voice in a more manly tone, this is still the import of her speech, 'God, even our God, will give us his blessing.'"

Mr. Hervey viewing faith as being founded in the self-evidencing light of the word, as being the effect of the demonstration of the Spirit, and in its very nature implying an assurance of the divine all-sufficiency and grace, apprehended that it gave the soul a conscious enjoyment of the Saviour, and that it was the best means of knowing our actual interest in him, and that we are under no delusion.

He thought, with other evangelical divines, that so far as a believer is in the exercise of this direct and assured faith, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, he needeth not the support of other marks and evidences of grace within himself, because his mind rests entirely and quietly in the divine all-sufficiency, grace, and faithfulness; and this he reckoned the most desirable way to keep all other marks and evidences of a gracious state clear and distinct. To use his own words; "As faith is such a persuasion of the heart, and such a reception of Christ (as above described,) it assures the soul of salvation by its own act, antecedent to all reflection on its fruits and effects, or works and evidences. It assures the soul of acquittance from guilt, and of reconciliation to Christ; of a title to the everlasting inheritance, and of grace sufficient for every case of need." He was happy that his sentiments of the appropriation of faith were not only scriptural, but confirmed by a multitude of eminent witnesses. "If the reader," says he, "inquire after their names, he will find some of them enumerated in the following catalogue:—Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Beza, Bullinger, Bucer, Knox, Craig, Melvil, Bruce, Davidson, Forbes, &c. Ursinus, Zanchius, Junius, Piscator, Rollock, Wendelinus, Chamierus, Bodius, Pareus, Altingius, the Triglandii, Arnoldus, Marsius, Wollebius, Heideggerus, Essenius, Turretinus, Witsius, &c. Also many British divines; among others, Perkins, Pemble, Willet, Gouge, Rogers, Owen, and Marshall." He further adds, "If we were apparently and demonstratively in an error, yet, to err with such company, and in the footsteps of such guides, must very much tend to mitigate the severity of censure. But I believe few serious persons will venture to charge error and delusion upon such a venerable body of Protestant

divines, so eminent for their learning, and so exemplary for their holiness; whose labours were so remarkably owned by God, and whose sentiments, have been adopted by so many reformed churches. The declarations of the English and Palatine churches are produced in the Dialogue. I have in my hand an extract from the confessions and standard doctrines of the Church of Scotland—of Ireland—of France—of Helvetia; with all which Aspasio has the happiness to agree. Only some of them are much stronger in displaying and maintaining the special *fiducia*, or the appropriating persuasion of faith.”*

* It would greatly conduce to clear views of this subject, were proper distinctions between the assurance of faith itself and the assurance of sense observed, and rightly understood. This Mr. Hervey illustrates in the close of Dialogue 16. When he, and other evangelical divines, speak of assurance as essential to faith, many have supposed they taught, that none can be real Christians who do not feel that they are passed from death to life, and have unclouded views of their own interest in Christ, so as to say, under the manifestations of his love, “My Beloved is mine, and I am his;” but God forbid we should thus offend against the generation of his children. That many of them want such an assurance, may not be questioned. This, however, is the assurance, not of faith, but of sense; and vastly different they are. The object of the former is Christ revealed in the word, the object of the latter, is Christ revealed in the heart; the ground of the former, is the testimony of God without us, that of the latter, is the work of the Spirit within us; the one embraces the promise, looking at nothing but the veracity of the promiser, the other enjoys the promise in the sweetness of its actual accomplishment. The question on the first point is this, Is the scriptural testimony true or not? But on the second point the question is, Am I possessed of saving faith in the divine testimony? am I already in a state of union to Christ? Another distinction also is needful. Faith sometimes denotes the simple belief of a doctrine or truth; at other times, and

This assured confidence Mr. Hervey maintained more explicitly in *Theron and Aspasio* than in his former works. This gave alarm to several who admired his writings, and some of them plied him close with various objections. These objectors, however undesignedly, were attempting to overthrow the solid foundation laid for the hope and confidence of guilty sinners. They contradicted the divine grant of Christ and salvation to sinners, by clogging it with pre-requisites and preparations of sensibility, of need, real desire, &c. Finding Mr. Cudworth of the same judgment with himself, he wrote to him, that by their careful and united consideration of all objections that had been offered, this very important point might be sifted, and more clearly established. The effect of these consultations considerably enriched the third edition of *Theron and Aspasio*, particularly Dial. 15 and 16, and rendered it more accurate. On this he says; "I found it necessary to make these additions, in order to maintain two very important points, which are opposed by many, even of my pious friends; I mean the assurance, or special application or ap-

most frequently in Scripture, trust or confidence in God, or a fiducial reliance upon his mercy and promise in Christ for salvation. It is evident these two are very distinct, and that some things may be affirmed of faith, taken in the one sense, which cannot, with any propriety, be ascribed to it when it is taken in the other. We trust this observation is sufficient to show the absurdity of those cavils and sophistical reasonings, by which some have endeavoured to throw an odium on the doctrine taught by Mr. Hervey and many other celebrated divines, concerning the appropriation or assurance of faith, and to represent it as absurd and ridiculous, as a faith without any ground: such it would certainly be, if saving faith never signified any thing more than the belief of some doctrinal proposition, fact, or event, recorded in Scripture.

propriation, included in the faith of the operation of God; and that sinners, as sinners, without the preparative or condition of any qualification, are allowed, are warranted, thus to apply Christ to themselves, by virtue of the free offer and grant made in the gospel. 'These two doctrines seem to me the very quintessence of grace, and the riches of the gospel.'

In a letter to Mr. Hervey Mr. Cudworth observes, "Upon the whole, in the objections made to your views of faith, we seem to be only on the old Reformation dispute still—whether we are to be justified by Christ alone, or whether we must first find some righteousness in ourselves?"

Mr. Kennedy having written in defence of these sentiments, Mr. Hervey remarks, "Mr. Kennedy speaks the very sentiments of my heart, better than my own tongue could express them; I do not perceive a single sentence to which I should make any objection. With other believers in Jesus Christ, I would be of one heart, but with Mr. Kennedy I have the pleasure to be of one mind."*

Mr. Hervey always considers faith as connected with its object. He knew that the Spirit of God, in the Scriptures, frequently and fully describes the object of faith, and the nature of the testimony to be believed, but seldom describes or defines the act of believing; that it is the very nature of faith to overlook itself as an act altogether, and to be wholly employed about its object; and that, in fact, it derives its whole meaning, existence and use from this. On the object of faith he therefore enlarges in his writings, on the precious person, names, love, undertaking, relations, grace, and laws of the Saviour; and on his various blessings, peace, pardon, holiness, comfort, &c. So he says: "Pre-

* Gen. Col. of Letters.

cious faith, which brings honour to the holy name of Jesus, and comfort to the sinner's soul; this treats him, according to his infinite glory and infinite grace, as the true God, as the great God, as God over all, blessed for evermore. 'This noble faith acknowledges and uses him, as the all-sufficient Saviour from the guilt, and an almighty Saviour from the power of sin. It firmly trusts, that the death of Jesus has finished transgression, and made reconciliation for iniquity; that the Spirit of Christ will subdue corruption, renew us after the image of God, and animate us all to the duties of religion.'" He also insisted often on the warrant of faith. Like other evangelical writers, he never confounds the warrant of faith with the marks or evidences of it. He always shows, that while men esteem Christ precious, know the plague of their own heart, love God's commandments, &c. these evidence them believers; but that men, merely as sinful creatures, are clearly and fully warranted, from God's word, to receive Christ and his benefits by faith. His views of this point were the following: "Every word of God is undoubtedly true, and to be depended upon, according to the declarations thereof; and no soul can possibly be deceived in believing and so trusting to it. The Holy Ghost does not work in us to believe otherwise than the word declares, no more than he excites us to do otherwise than the word requires. 'This word declares Christ as the gift of God to the world, and invites all the ends of the earth to look to him for salvation, and assures them, that whosoever believes on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. 'This word, then, sufficiently entitles, authorizes, and warrants every sinner confidently to trust on Christ for his own particular salvation, by virtue of God's invitation and com-

mand; and this is what the Spirit of God clears to every soul that receives Christ." As to a full assurance, or the highest degree of the grace of faith, he used to express himself in the moderate words of a late judicious divine: "I do not affirm, that without a full assurance there is no faith; but this I maintain, that wherever the latter exists, there will be a sincere pursuit of the former." Among the reasons why so few persons attain this eminent blessing, he reckoned the following: 'They understand not the perfect freeness of grace, nor the immense merits of Christ: they do not consider the unspeakable value of an assured faith, neither are they aware it is intended for sinful men as such.

He viewed faith imputed for righteousness, only as it accepts Christ's righteousness; even as one's receiving a diamond with his hand from a friend may make him worth some thousand pounds, yet it is properly the friend's gift, the diamond, that enriches him, and not merely the taking it into his hand. 'The righteousness of faith he considered as not at all the righteousness of its own act, but the righteousness of Christ, of God, the obedience of one; and he reckoned that believing as neither honourable to God, nor any way profitable to us, which doth not receive Christ himself to be our complete righteousness, without the consideration of any thing performed by us, or wrought in us. To use his own words: "We are justified by faith, in the same manner as we are fed by the hand, or as we are said to drink of a cup. Neither the hand nor the cup are the cause of our sustenance, but the instruments, the one of conveying, the other of receiving it."

From his experience, he says; "To what afflicting fears, to what grievous despondency, should I, for my part, be perpetually liable, if my

own faith was the ground of my justification. Blessed be the Father of mercies! we have a surer support: not upon faith, but upon its gracious Author and glorious Object is the hope of Israel founded. My faith beholds nothing but the Divine Jesus; it never inquires, what have I done? what have I suffered? but what has that most illustrious Personage done and suffered? what has Jehovah, manifested in our nature, wrought for the benefit and redemption of sinners?"

This assured faith he also considered as productive of the truest joy. 'This mere appropriating persuasion of Christ and his righteousness, Mr. Hervey found of more use to stay his soul under spiritual conflicts, than looking back to ten thousand evidences without it. When he went afresh to Jesus as a sinful creature, he found all the relief he needed, though he could not apply as a saint. Wishing a correspondent might be filled with all joy and peace in believing, he remarks; "It is observable, the apostle says, all joy and peace are to be derived, not merely from practising, but believing; not from any thing in ourselves, but from the fulness that is in Christ?"'

Under distress from indwelling sin, he advises in these words: "Shall we pore upon our blemishes, and fasten our eyes upon our wounds? This will increase our anguish. But let us turn our eyes to him who was typified by the brazen serpent; by his stripes we are healed. He that diverts his attention from this sublimely excellent object, must unavoidably fall into perplexity and distress. Did we steadfastly believe in our incarnate God; believe that every one of our iniquities is laid on him; that whatever he did and suffered for the redemption of sinners, he did and suffered for us; that Christ, the Lord of glory, is made to

us righteousness : were we rooted and grounded in this belief, how would it cheer our thoughts ! how would it draw the thorn from our consciences, and pour the balm of heaven upon our souls ! ' This faith is a source, is the only source, of substantial and lasting joy.' This Mr. Hervecy attests by his own experience : when I depart from this precious truth, assurance by the direct act of faith, I fall into darkness and distress ; but when, looking for no evidences in myself, I depend on the free promise of God in his word ; when regarding myself only as a poor sinner, I confidently trust in Christ as my righteousness and salvation, then light beams forth and springs up." While these were his views of faith, he apprehended they were entirely agreeable to reason.

" For my part," says he, " I am no more surprised that some revealed truths should amaze my understanding, than that the blazing star should dazzle my eyes. I should renounce my very reason, if I did not believe what Omniscience attests, even though it should imply what is altogether inexplicable to my scanty conceptions. My reason, in her sedatest moments, assures me that Scripture cannot deceive, though I be unable to comprehend. My reason declares, that I shall be a rebel against her laws, if I do not submit to the determination of Scripture as decisive, as infallible." " My reason says, Prove all things, admit nothing without a satisfactory proof ; and when any thing is proved to be revealed of God, receive it as an oracle. When Reason sets up herself in proud contradistinction to the sacred oracles ; when, all-arrogant and self-sufficient, she says to the word of Scripture, I have no need of thee ; she is then, I must be bold to maintain, not only a glow-worm, but an *ignis fatuus*, not only a bubble, but a snare. I am, how-

ever, far from denying that noble faculty of reason, when exerted in her proper sphere, and acting in a deferential subordination to the revealed will of Heaven. While she exercises her power within these limits, she is unspeakably serviceable, and cannot be too much cultivated." What he puts in the mouth of his Aspasio was his own exercise:—"Pardon is mine, grace is mine, Christ, with all his spiritual blessings, is mine. Why? because I am conscious of sanctifying operations in my own breast? rather because God hath spoken in his holiness—because all these precious privileges are consigned over to me (as a sinner) in the everlasting gospel, with a clearness as unquestionable as the truth—with a certainty inviolable as the oath of God. Bless the Lord, O my soul, that a sinner, such a vile sinner, should be allowed to take Christ and all his salvation, as my own, and thus to assure myself of pardon, holiness and glory." Through the whole of his pilgrimage he exercised himself in this believing confidence.

Mr. Hervey expresses his views of holiness in the following terms: "True holiness consists in the love of God and the love of man; that unforced, unfeigned, and most rational love of God, which arises from a discovery of his unspeakable mercy, and infinite kindness to us; that cordial, disinterested, and universal love of man, which flows from the possession of a satisfactory and delightful portion in the Lord Jehovah. Holiness, thus stated (says he) is considered not as the means, but as a distinguished part of our salvation, or rather as the very central point, in which all the means of grace, and all the ordinances of religion terminate." To a friend he exclaims: "O what a happiness, and what a high distinction, to be enabled to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour! May this be the

privilege of your life and conversation; then you will have no cause to regret the want of a ducal coronet." Mr. Hervey apprehended it a dangerous mistake to imagine, that holiness was something entirely different from salvation. He knew that upon this principle people suppose, they must endeavour to be holy, and then they shall receive salvation; whereas the truth is, all true holiness is an essential ingredient of that complete and everlasting salvation, which is enjoyed by believing on the name of Jesus. Mr. Hervey further adds as to holiness; "Man, in a natural state, is absolutely incapable of practising this holiness or happiness, and from this state none are released but by being united to Christ, or, as the apostle speaks, by Christ dwelling in the heart through faith."

He well understood, and constantly maintained, the connexion between faith and holiness. The faith which Mr. Hervey maintained, was a trust in Jesus for his whole salvation, for a salvation from sin, as well as from wrath; for that holiness of heart and life, which is absolutely necessary to make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, as well as for that righteousness, by which only we can be accepted in the sight of God. He judged that the holy tendency of this faith did not arise so much from the nature of the act, as from its object, Christ made in the offer of the gospel to us sinful creatures, sanctification. He would sometimes say to his friends, "Show me what men say of virtue, and I will show that the faith I plead for is productive of it."

He says, "I am sorry to hear that Mr. — should think my doctrine tends to the introduction of licentiousness; far, very far from it; it is the genuine doctrine of the Scriptures, and the only doctrine to reclaim mankind, as it encourages them

not to continue in their sins, but to turn to their injured Lord, and receive salvation at his beneficent hand. ‘Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out,’ are our blessed Lord’s own words, and all my preaching and writings are founded on that comfortable declaration to my lost undone fellow creatures, that tender invitation to them in whom there is no health.” Like every gospel minister, he carefully explained and enforced the duties of holiness to his hearers, in all their extent and spirituality. But he viewed the truths of the gospel, strictly taken, as the ministration of Christ and his grace to the heart, these truths of themselves disposing it to holiness. On this point he appeals to facts: “Mark the effect of preaching mere morality, and of preaching the grace of Christ,” says he to a correspondent, “Do they, who would decry faith, and extol their good works, distinguish themselves by the practice of them? If not, I must beg leave to say they are self-condemned. Only observe, for the next month (by their fruits you will know them,) the conduct of those who are such loud advocates for the merits, the dignity of man, and the freedom of his actions, and of those who rely on the active and passive obedience of Christ; and then tell me ingenuously, which are the people that pay the greatest reverence to the word of God, and in particular to the fourth commandment? inquire which of them use family prayer? whose conversation is most edifying? which of them visit and travel on Sunday? and which of them pass that holy day as becometh those that have named the name of Christ? I will be bold to say, upon an impartial examination, the majority of these will be found on the side of those who embrace the doctrine of the imputation of Christ’s righteousness, and who expect salvation

by him alone, and not by deeds which they have done."*

Through life he experienced, that his purity of heart and conduct bore a proportional degree with the appropriation of faith, in the person and work of Jesus, as an effect from the cause; so that, when his believing assurance was weak, his purity was little, and when it was strong, his holiness was eminent. 'The following words of a learned and evangelical modern writer well deserve a place here: "Mr. Hervey lived a life of faith, and, in consequence of that, a life of holiness in the Redeemer. In the smallest things he was exemplary. The late Mr. Romaine told Mr. Serle, that once being in his company at breakfast, Mr. Hervey (being in ill health,) retired with a small basin of milk to another part of the room, and he heard him praying over it: 'Lord, if I obtain no nourishment from this food, at least let me get thankfulness for it.' This is a little sample of the spirit in which he lived; and his life was uniformly such. Happy would it be for some, who have thought it

* Gen. Col. Let. 209.—The following anecdote, related of a fellow-labourer of Mr. Hervey by Sir Richard Hill, may not be unsuitable in this place: "When that faithful minister of Christ, Mr. Venn, was Vicar of Huddersfield in Yorkshire, he told me, that a neighbouring clergyman, the Rev. Dr. L——, one day addressed him nearly in the following words:—'Mr. Venn, I know not how it is, but I should really think your doctrines of grace and faith were calculated to make all your hearers live in sin; and yet I must own that there is an astonishing reformation wrought in your parish, whereas I do not believe I ever made one soul the better, though I have been telling them their duty for many years.' Mr. Venn smiled at this ingenuous confession, and frankly told him, he would do well to burn all his old sermons, and try what preaching Christ would do."

proper to traduce him, if their hearts were as warm towards Christ, and their lives were as unspotted as his."

By several, under the influence of a legal temper, Mr. Hervey has been called an Antinomian in principle, as many other evangelical writers have been.* Mr. Hervey detested the pernicious principles which justly go under this name, and laboured hard to explode them.

He explicitly maintained the necessary connection between faith and holiness, and the overpowering influence of the former upon the latter. Upon this he pleasantly and judiciously enlarges as to religion in general, and the various graces and virtues of the Christian life. We offer the following extracts from his private letters, directed to those whom he had good evidence to consider as partakers of this holy faith:—"So long as the 11th

* In every age, the most evangelical writers and ministers have been aspersed with the character of Antinomians, by persons unacquainted with the gospel, who went about to establish their own righteousness. Among others, Messrs. Trail, Chauncy, Romaine, &c. in England, met with much obloquy and reproach, under this name. Several in Scotland also suffered in their good name on this account: as the eminently holy and judicious Messrs. Hog, of Carnock, Boston, of Ettrick, and Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine, while maintaining the same doctrines for which Mr. Hervey has been so much blamed. The Antinomian errors are the following, *none of which the above ministers, or Mr. Hervey, ever maintained*:—"The books of the Old Testament are no rule of our faith under the gospel. Christ, and pardon of sin, are no less our's before believing than after it. Good works are not necessary in respect of salvation, Christ having fulfilled all the demands of the law in our stead. The ten commandments are not of indispensable obligation. When a believer comes short in obeying God's law, he sins not, and ought not to mourn for it." Horrid perversions of the truth!

chapter of the Hebrews remains in the Bible, it will remain an unanswerable confutation of those objections which suppose the doctrine of faith to have an unkindly influence on religious or virtuous practice; against all such cavils it will stand fast for evermore, as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Let not any suspect that the message of free rich grace has a tendency to sooth men into supineness, or serve the cause of licentiousness. It is of all other expedients the most effectually calculated to reconcile us to God, to subdue our enmity, and captivate our perverse affections, to impress our alienated hearts with adoring gratitude, and engage our refractory wills to dutiful obedience.” “Relying on nothing valuable in yourself (he writes to a friend,) but depending entirely upon the faithful promise of Him who cannot lie, then you will feel your heart excited to love your most adorable Benefactor; then you will study to please him in all your conversation; then you will be truly holy.” “The Lord purifieth the heart by faith in Jesus Christ, as giving his most glorious person for our ransom, and by his own oblation finishing our transgression, yea, perfecting us for ever. Would we renounce all ungodliness, would we live soberly, righteously, and godly, in the world? That grace, appropriated by faith, is the sure, the effectual means of true sanctification; the sure, the effectual motive of willing obedience.” “Faith is not a dormant grace, but an active principle. As light never ceases to issue from the sun, or water from a perennial fountain; so a holy conversation, and a purified heart, are the inseparable effects of true faith: those will always be more exemplary, in proportion as this is more lively.” He illustrates this in particular instances of duty: “I congratulate Mr. — on his wisdom and happiness in giving up himself without reserve to the

blessed God. Why should we be reluctant in this delightful affair? One cause of our backwardness is, our stubborn selfishness and strong corruption: another reason is, we do not attempt it in the proper way; we consider perhaps the reasonableness of it, we urge on our consciences the necessity of it, and we labour with our hearts, if by any means we may bring them to the practice of it; but we seldom apply the endearing motives of the gospel. Paul says, 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice.' Here the duty of surrendering ourselves to the Almighty is inculcated, and the easy, the expeditious manner of doing it, namely, by believing, is displayed. We are to present our bodies, not in contradistinction to our souls, but in allusion to the whole burnt-offering of old, in which not a joint, or the fat, or the kidneys only, but the whole of the animal, was set apart for the victim; so we are to devote, not this talent or that only but all we have, and all we are, to the glory of his name, and to the good pleasure of his will, a living sacrifice, not dead in carnal pleasure, nor asleep in spiritual indolence, but awake and active for our Divine Master, fervent and zealous in his sacred service. What should engage us to all this? The most inviting and the most forcible of inducements, the mercies of our God. He has given himself, and all his sublime perfections, to be our portion. He has given his Son, his infinite atonement and everlasting righteousness, to be our salvation. He has given us his Spirit to testify of Christ in our hearts, to apply this great salvation to our souls, and to make all grace to abound toward us. All this he has given freely, irrevocably, eternally; and can we, under the influence of such a faith,

can we forbear the inquiry, 'What shall I render to the Lord, for all his benefits toward me?'"

"The apostle says, Repent and be baptized; but if a poor sinner had asked him this question, How shall I repent? what shall melt my stony heart? what shall make me abhor myself, and my beloved lusts? To this effect he would probably have replied; Nothing but the grace of God manifested in Christ; believe that the Lord delivered up his dearest Son to die in your stead; believe that the blessed Jesus has borne every one of your sins, in his bleeding body and on the accursed tree: this, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, will soften the hard heart: this will alienate your heart from all iniquity; by this you will be taught godly sorrow, Zech. xii. 10, and evangelical humiliation, Ezek. xxxvi. Repent, and believe the gospel. Repent, forsake all your vices and all your follies. Mortify every evil temper, and renounce every evil way. In order to render this practicable, believe the gospel, wherein a Saviour is preached and displayed, who makes peace for such offenders, reconciles them to God, obtains eternal redemption for them; this will sweetly draw your affections from iniquity, and sweetly attach them to the blessed God."

"The truest humility, the most genuine abasement, is grounded on a sense of our ever-blessed Redeemer's love. He that is high above all height, humbled himself to death, even the death of the cross, that he might make expiation for these offences. When we are properly impressed with this astonishing and delightful truth, it will sink us in humiliation, while it exalts us in hope. If we observe the scales of a balance, the higher the one ascends, the lower proportionably the other drops. So the more we advance in this faith the more we

shall increase in poverty of spirit. Taylor, upon 'Faith, working by Love,' is a work I never read. O that I may know its truth by happy experience! The love of Christ is the true source of repentance, the true spur of obedience, and the true spur to mortification; it will make even the stern countenance of that dreaded duty wear a smile. Under its influence, the difficult task of self-denial becomes not practicable only, but easy and eligible; we shall without reluctance deny ourselves for His sake, who has obtained pardon of sin and eternal redemption for us; we shall gladly renounce any alluring vanity for his honour, who has made us children of God and heirs of glory; we shall be ready to distribute, willing to communicate, for the relief of his afflicted servants, when we believe that their exalted Lord emptied even his veins and laid down his very life, for their salvation. Faith is characterised at working by love. This is its happy tendency, and this is its generous language,—Has Christ been so inconceivably gracious to me? Surely, then, I should be kind to my fellow-creatures, and to all his people. Has he borne all my sins on the tree of his cross? Then let me bear with patience the disappointments which Providence may ordain, and bear with meekness the disrespect which my neighbours may offer. Has he clothed me with the robe of his immaculate righteousness? How gladly, then, should I clothe his poor servants with the fleeces of my sheep, and accommodate them with the superfluities of my wealth! Has he purchased life and immortality for so despicable a creature, so vile a sinner! Surely, then, I should be zealous to glorify his blessed name—should employ my little stock of talents to magnify his Majesty, and to further his sacred cause."

“It is St. Paul’s argument, and a most affecting argument it is: ‘Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.’ May the Spirit of eternal goodness confirm you in this faith; and give you a happy persuasion that all your sins are blotted out by the blood of the Lamb; and that though there are and will be failings in you, yet there is no condemnation for you! This will promote and facilitate the increase of every virtue; just as a generous cordial exhilarates the spirits, invigorates the limbs, and sheds its benign influence through the whole frame.” His constant direction was, “Cherish faith, and you will of course cultivate obedience; water the root, and the branches of universal godliness will assuredly partake of its beneficial effects, will spread and bring forth their fruits.”

On the whole, while the Antinomian pretends to receive Christ, but does not reckon himself obliged to *walk* in Christ, and the legalist considers himself as under an indispensable obligation to walk in obedience to the law of Christ, while he despises the doctrine of faith in his person and mediation, Mr. Hervey was favoured with scriptural views of faith and holiness; and, as a true Christian, aimed to receive the Lord Jesus by believing, and to walk in him by practical holiness.

Mr. Hervey makes the following remarks as to an error, “which is often committed in our attempts to instruct little children. What is more common than to tell them, ‘if they will be good, God Almighty will love and bless them;’ whereas they should rather be informed, that God Almighty has given his Son to die for sinners; and if they pray to him, he will forgive their sins, will make

them holy and happy, and bless them with all spiritual blessings in Christ."

The doctrines of grace, which he so explicitly maintained, he fully expected would be opposed. He had been warned of this by Mr. Whitefield; "I foretel the fate of these volumes; nothing but your scenery can screen you; self will never consent to die, though slain in so genteel a manner, without showing some resentment against its artful murderer." He expected it himself. Enlarging on sovereign grace, as running through all divine blessings, he observes: "This is that glorious gospel, which human learning could never have discovered, which carnal reason cannot understand, which the wisdom of this world counteth foolishness, which the envy of the devil and the pride of man will always oppose. So long as the devil is suffered to deceive the nations, and so long as the heart is unconvinced of sin, we may assure ourselves, that the doctrines of justification by Christ's righteousness, and salvation by free grace, will be opposed."

He could also glory in any name of reproach (as the honourable reproach of Christ) that might be cast upon him, for asserting the absolute boundless freedom of the grace of God, which excludes every kind of human merit, and teaches men to deny ungodliness and wordly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly.

He evinced much candour and forbearance, but properly guards himself in the following words:—"I apprehend, that between Christians, whose judgments disagree only about a form of prayer, or manner of worship, there is no more essential difference than between flowers that bloom from the same kind of seed, but happen to be somewhat

diversified in the mixture of their colours; whereas, if one denies the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and degrades the incarnate God to the meanness of a mere creature; if another cries up the worthiness of human works, and depreciates the meritorious righteousness of the glorious Mediator; if a third addresses the incommunicable honours to a finite being, and bows to the image, or prays to the saint; these are errors, in my opinion, unhappily derogatory to the Redeemer's dignity, and not a little prejudicial to the comfort of his people. Against these, therefore, to remonstrate, bespeaks, not the censorious bigot, but the friend of truth, and the lover of mankind; whereas, to stand neuter and silent, while such principles are propagated, might be an instance of criminal remissness, rather than of Christian moderation. For persons who espouse such persuasions as the former, and habituate themselves to such practices as the latter, we will not fail to maintain a tender compassion; we will not cease to put up earnest intercessions; we will also acknowledge and love whatever is truly excellent and amiable in them. Yet we dare not subscribe their creed; we cannot remit our assiduous but *kind* endeavours to reconcile them to what (upon the most impartial examination,) we are thoroughly convinced is a more scriptural belief and a purer worship."

HIS PUBLIC CHARACTER AND CONDUCT.

IN his public ministry, Mr. Hervey clearly stated and illustrated the difference of the law, which requires all obedience of men; and of the gospel strictly taken, which freely offers and gives all privileges to us; and their blessed harmony and

mutual subserviency in Christ. He aimed to counteract, with equal care, self-righteous legality on the one hand, and Antinomian licentiousness on the other. He says himself to his people: "The usual subjects of your preacher, are the absolutely free grace of God, and the immensely rich merits of Christ; the infinite atonement and everlasting righteousness of the Redeemer. While he enlarges on these, he is sowing the seed of vital holiness, without which seed, holiness will never flourish in your hearts, will never bring forth fruit in your lives." He was anxiously concerned to have his people thoroughly convinced that they were sinful lost creatures, not to recommend them to Christ, but that, from such a conviction, they might perceive their indispensable need of a Saviour. To this purpose he says to them; "I dare not flatter you with vain hopes; I must not buoy you with ungrounded imaginations. Beware, I beseech you, lest you build for eternity on the sand. Trust no longer in a refuge of lies, lest all your admired attainments, at the day of final retribution, be like straw, and hay, and stubble, in Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace."* In another sermon he thus administers reproof: "If I could speak in thunder, I could never inveigh too loudly against these vices: ye that go on in such iniquities, ye are scattering brimstone on your habitations, ye are heaping up wrath against the day of wrath, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"†

Mr. Hervey especially preached Jesus to his people, and enlarged on the glorious person, the mysterious incarnation, the amazing satisfaction of

* The Cross of Christ the Christian's glory.

† Sermon on The Way of Holiness.

Christ Jesus the Lord; the glories of his exalted state; his mediatorial characters, offices, and relations. These were his darling themes, on which he expatiated with peculiar delight; and when any topics that have not the most immediate relation to Christ were the subjects of his discourse, yet still it might be said of his sermons, what the apostle says of Christians, "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus;" whatever mystery, whatever privilege, whatever duty he chose to explain, still Christ was all in all. If he insisted on a divine attribute, he declared how it shone forth in Christ with the brightest evidence. If on a promise, he explained how in Christ it was yea and amen. If on a command, he inculcated the propriety of obedience by furnishing motives deduced from Christ, and how impossible it is to obey without being united to him as the head of vital influence. His precious Redeemer was the beginning, the middle, and the end of every sermon with him. He apprehended that all the efficacy of gospel-truth, for light, holiness, and comfort, centered in and arose from the divine person of Immanuel. He particularly was determined, with the apostle, to preach him as crucified. Well might he appeal to his hearers, in one of his published sermons: "Does not the joyful sound echo under these roofs? Is not Christ crucified set before your eyes? Crucified for such offenders; crucified that such offenders as you may be pardoned, may be accepted, may be glorified." The cross of Christ was the doctrine that lay nearest his heart; this, in all its tendencies and bearings, in all its relations to the honour of God and the salvation of men, he delighted to elucidate in every various form of words, and on this he dwelt with growing zeal and ardour to the close

of life. It was the subject that met him in every direction, that beautified and adorned every other topic, that lived and breathed in all his preaching, the centre of all his sermons; in reference to, and in dependence upon which, other subjects were considered. As an ambassador of Christ, he wished to spread far and wide the honours of the Lamb that was slain; to make every sacred roof resound with his fame, and every human heart glow with his love; to declare, as far as the force of words would go, the inconceivable richness of that atoning blood, whose merits are commensurate with the glories of the divinity; to tell the most sinful wretch what pity yearns in Immanuel's bowels, and what the compassionate High Priest has done for his soul; to invite the indigent to become rich, and to entreat the guilty to accept of pardon, because in the crucified Jesus is fulness of grace, and all-sufficiency to save. What he laid before an assembly of ministers, he exemplified in his own conduct. He set not before his hearers a system of refined heathenism, nor entertained them with cold spiritless lectures of virtue; on the contrary, he displayed the infinitely tender love, and immensely free grace of the dying Jesus. No topics in the whole compass of oratory, no argument amidst all the stores of reason, did he find so admirably calculated to excite the finest movements of the soul, to strike all the inmost springs of action, with the most persuasive energy. When he alarmed the supine, or intimidated the presumptuous, he would call them to behold God's own Son weltering in his blood—God's own Son transfixed with the arrows of justice. He bade them consider, if judgment begins with the immaculate Mediator, where the irreclaimable sinner would ap-

pear? How could he escape the stroke, or bear the weight of God's everlasting vengeance? When he would comfort the distressed, he pointed them to an atonement, whose merits are infinite, and able to save to the very uttermost; he led them to a righteousness, whose efficacy is unbounded, and sufficient to justify the ungodly, and to the only sovereign balm for a wounded conscience. In supporting the weak, and animating the doubting, he showed them promises, free and exceeding great and precious promises, sealed by the blood of Jehovah's Son. He declared,

“To man the bleeding cross has promis'd all,
The bleeding cross has sworn eternal grace.”

This he viewed as the most restorative cordial to the drooping Christian; and, in short, found the doctrine of Immanuel's cross suited to answer all the ends of his ministry, and promote all the truly valuable interests of his people. Particularly, he was persuaded that this doctrine, though rich with consolation to the ruined sinner, was in no respect likely to open a door for licentiousness, and embolden sinners to prosecute their vices; on the contrary, he knew it was the only powerful motive to that genuine repentance, which flows from an unfeigned love of God, and operates in a hearty detestation of all sin. While this was to some a stumbling-block and foolishness, he made it the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and ending, of all his ministrations. He faithfully told his people their sin and duty, as prudently as possible, and with the gentleness of Christ; but as to these points nothing could prevail on him to conceal or disguise them. He used this method of preaching, that by union and fellowship with Jesus they

might enjoy every spiritual blessing, and be adorned with every virtue: earnestly he wished to ingraft his hearers into the true vine, that he might quickly find them loaded with the fruits of righteousness. He longed particularly to have a lively sense of the goodness of a redeeming God, manifested in freely offering pardon and peace to rebellious sinners in the gospel, impressed on their souls. From this source, he knew, by happy experience, that all the amiable graces and important duties, which constitute the dignity or happiness of our nature, could alone be derived. He clearly testified the grace of God, and constantly affirmed, that they who believed in God, should be careful to maintain good works.

His manner of preaching was impressive; indeed, he brought his message written on his heart. He spoke of the guilt of sin, and the sufferings of Christ, in the exercise of feeling his own guilt, and leaning on these sufferings for its expiation. He expatiated on the love of Christ, under the influence of a heart kindled with it; and on the glory to come, in the temper of one who expects, and longs, to be a sharer in it. In preaching, Mr. Hervey was always very earnest, particularly near the end; so much so, that he had always to change his linen. We have several instances of this earnestness in the few sermons he published, especially in his addresses to sinners:—"O that I might prevail! O that God would make you sensible of your peril! O that man, woman, and child would ask, How shall I flee from the wrath to come? Fain would I prevail in this most importunate address. My dear friends, if you turn away from such invitations, you are ruined to eternity. To believe on the Son of God is your grand concern,

the one thing needful; without this nothing will profit you; therefore I repeat my exhortation, therefore I am so urgent, therefore I cannot dismiss the subject, without beseeching the Father of mercies to command a blessing upon the word." Under great weakness of body, he says to his people, "Shall I proceed? I have been already copious, perhaps somewhat tedious, yet you will bear with me on this occasion; yes, you will bear with me a little longer, for I am loth, very loth to dismiss you without persuading you. Let me entreat you, brethren, for the sake of your immortal souls; let me charge you by all that is desirable in time, and awful in eternity, not to neglect these counsels."

His mode of preaching was not that general address which seems to take for granted all men are saints; it was, on the contrary, very discriminating. He knew that he preached to a mixed audience, men in very different situations, and of very different characters, and, like a wise steward, he gave to each his portion of food in due season: the sinner in a natural state he roused, he also pressed and encouraged him to the use of all the means appointed for the working of saving faith; the saint he exhorted to build himself up on his most holy faith, in the exercise of every good word and work. The style which he used in his sermons, was far from possessing that luxuriancy and brilliancy which is to be found in his Meditations; yet, while it was in the highest degree simple and perspicuous, it never degenerated into rant or vulgarity. He wished to adapt his language to the lowest capacity. Mr. Hervey thought evangelic doctrine and plain language of much more importance to his parishioners, than elaborate and orna-

mental discourses; though few men were more capable of gratifying a polite audience. While he could see and admire the beauties of the eloquent orator or strong reasoner, he wished to be a useful minister of Christ. As to his preparations for the pulpit, he, for many years, while at Dummer, Bideford, and Collingtree, wrote notes of his sermons in short-hand; after he was settled at Weston-Favel he discontinued this practice, having then a good acquaintance with the system of gospel-truth. He, without notes, by meditation and prayer, arranged his preparations for public service; so that, as he says, all his sermons vanished into air, unless the blessed Spirit had left any trace of them on the heart of the hearers.

Mr. Hervey suited himself to his different charges; at Bideford he never forgot the sailors, and at Weston he knew he spoke to husbandmen. The following extract from a sermon of his to sailors will illustrate this remark: "What we have mentioned of our Lord's saying, 'Peace, be still,' to the raging waves, may instruct you whom to address in the hour of danger; and may also teach you the wisdom of securing an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose divine word even the winds and sea obey. The hour is coming, dear sailors, when you shall hail with shouts your native land no more. O then seek unto Christ; get an interest in his merits; give yourselves up to his governance; let his word be your compass; let his grace hold the helm, and steer your course; let his blessing fill your sails; let his blood, his righteousness, his Spirit be the prize of your calling; let this be the precious merchandize you covet, this the pearl of great price you seek. Lay hold on Christ; and, renouncing every other refuge, lay

the whole stress of your soul wholly on Christ, as a shipwrecked mariner relinquishes all his sinking cargo, and clings only to the planks that may float him safe to shore." 'To the mariners he also says: "You have not the opportunities which your relations enjoy on the land. You have no churches to frequent, no sacraments to receive, nor such plenty of the means of grace; but you see more of the awful God, and his tremendous works. You see with what dreadful splendour his lightnings shine upon the world, and with what astonishing majesty he utters his voice in thunders. You see how, at his command, the stormy wind ariseth, and the waters rage horribly: again, at his command, the tempestuous elements are hushed, and the troubled ocean sinks into a calm. 'The craggy rocks that break the foaming billows, and can as easily dash your vessel into a thousand pieces; those rocks are set fast by his mighty arm, and melt like wax at his tremendous frown. 'Those lofty mountains, which throw their shade over the seas, and point out your way from afar; all these arose at his word, and stand as so many attestations of his power. If he descend in terrible magnificence, they flee like frightened lambs; if he touch them in his indignation, they smoke like lighted tow."

In administering the Lord's Supper he was peculiarly lively and fervent, so that sometimes his natural strength would be quite exhausted.

The venerable Dr. Haweis attended his ministry one sabbath, and sent the compiler the following account, which he allows to be made public. "My knowledge and acquaintance with Mr. Hervey was only of one day, of one sabbath: he was removing from his ministerial labours, just as I was ready to

enter upon them, and being very desirous of seeing him before his departure to glory, and if I might secure but a thread of the mantle of Elijah, I rode from Oxford to Weston-Favel, his parish, a distance of about fifty miles for that purpose. I found him tall, and much emaciated: with serenity of countenance, and a cordial welcome, he asked me to dine and spend the day with him, which I accepted with pleasure. His preaching was purely evangelical, and very similar to his writings, in beautiful comments on the Scriptures he quoted; but his manner of delivery far from the elegance I expected in the tone of voice and action. His church was very small, and, though full, not remarkably crowded; but the people were very attentive to hear him. He invited me to go home with him; and engaged in very kind and spiritual conversation. I just remember one observation he made. We sat in a little inner parlour, and his mother and sister in one adjoining. I observed a little sauce-pan on the fire: "You will dine in the next room with my mother," said he; "I no longer eat meat; this is my little cookery (some gruel,) which, like the pulse which fed Daniel and his fellows, if the Lord please to bless it, can strengthen me for the King's service, that I should be fatter and fairer than if I used more substantial food." At evening, when I parted with him, to meet no more till we should be counted worthy to stand before the Son of man, an aged domestic brought out my horse, and, as I mounted, offered for me a fervent prayer, that He who dwelt in the bush, would be my guide through the wilderness. The distance of time is so great, that these are the only circumstances I remember."

He did not think it sufficient to preach on the

Lord's day only, but he set up a weekly lecture every Wednesday evening at Weston-Favel church, which was well attended, and much blessed to many of his neighbours; this lecture was held, during the winter, at seven o'clock, that it might not interfere with the work of the labouring people; and he lighted the church at his own expense, not choosing to put the parish to any additional charge. The exercise of his ministry, in this respect, he expresses to a correspondent in the following terms: "I have this afternoon been preaching to a crowded audience—the Lord grant it may be an edified one! One would be surprised, and I believe every body wonders, that I am able to officiate for myself. I am so weak (in 1753,) that I can hardly walk to the end of my parish, though a small one, and so tender, that I dare not visit my poor neighbours, for fear of catching cold in their bleak houses; yet I am enabled every Lord's day to catechise and expound to my children in the morning, and to preach in the afternoon; and every Wednesday evening, hay-time and harvest only excepted, I give them a lecture or sermon in Weston church. This is the Lord's doing, or, as your favourite book expresses it, this is owing to the good hand of God upon me. Join with me in adoring his name; pray with me, that if my life is spared, my capacity for his service may be prolonged; that if it be his blessed will, the day which puts an end to the one, may put a period to the other."

Mr. Hervey did not confine his preaching to his church alone, but took every opportunity to preach Christ. One of his constant hearers relates the following anecdote on this head, which fell under his own observation:—"Mr. Hervey had preached on Gen. xxviii. 12, 'And, behold, a ladder, set upon

the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven,' &c.: this he considered as a type of Christ. After he had done his duty in the church of Weston, as he was coming down the lane, leading from it to his own house, his hearers, wishing to show their regard to him, generally used to stand on each side of the lane to pay their respects, by bowing and courtesying to him as he passed: so soon as he came to the top of the lane, he lifted up his hands, and gave a short lecture as he passed along, saying, 'O my friends, I beg of God you may not forget this glorious ladder, that Almighty God hath provided for poor sinners; a ladder that will conduct us from this grovelling earth! a ladder that will raise us above our corruption, unto the glorious liberty of the sons of God! O my dear friends and hearers, I beg you will never forget this glorious ladder, but hope you may daily meditate upon it, till you reach the third heaven.'

He appears to have preached seldom any where but at home, unless when called to preach visitation-sermons. He gives an account of two occasions of this sort. In June, 1741, he writes: "I am just now going to our visitation, held at Northampton; I shall appear a stranger in our Jerusalem, knowing few, and known by fewer. Methinks there is something august and venerable in a meeting of the clergy, especially if one look upon them as so many agents from the invisible God, and envoys from the court of heaven. I hope to be put in mind of that awful day, when the Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, and Bishop of souls, will make his entrance in the clouds of heaven." He preached on 2 Cor. v. 18: the sermon was published after his death, and is entitled, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*. In 1753, he was

called to the same duty. He thus speaks of this occasion :—“ I am going to set out for Northampton, where I am to preach the visitation-sermon. I know not how I shall speak, so as to be heard in that very large and lofty church. May the Lord God Omnipotent make his strength perfect in my extreme weakness ! My text is, God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. O for the eloquence of an Apollos, and the fervour of a Boanerges, to treat worthily such a subject ! I am quite ashamed of my poor spiritless *jejune* composition ; and I am not less ashamed of my unbelief, that I dare not trust God for utterance, but, before an audience that is critical, forsooth, must use my notes.”

In these sermons, especially the last, he bore an open and explicit testimony to almost all the peculiarities of the gospel, before many who maintained an entirely opposite system, or cared for none of these things. He afterwards printed it for the benefit of a poor child. He seems also to have preached occasionally in one of the seaport towns in the west.

The performance of his ministerial duty was, for some time before he died, much interrupted by the ill state of his health, which would not permit him personally to fulfil all his pastoral duties ; a circumstance which gave him great concern. He would often lament his inability to serve his people, comparing himself to a bleeding disabled soldier, and only not slain. He would also sometimes say, “ My preaching is not like sending an arrow from a bow, to which some strength of arm is necessary, but like pulling the trigger of a gun, ready charged, which the feeblest finger can do.” During the last two or three years before he died, he could scarcely

do any thing more than preach once on the Lord's day, when people from many miles round flocked to hear him. His Wednesday evening lecture he discontinued for the last year of his life. In January, 1758, he writes: "The cough has totally destroyed the small remainder of strength, that I am quite incapable to preach so much as once on the Lord's day; I am obliged to beg assistance, and am looking out for a curate, to take the whole business on his hands. May the Head of the Church vouchsafe to furnish me with a faithful and wise steward, who may supply my lack of service, and give his household their portion of meat in due season." He always preached without notes, except on very particular occasions; but his method was judicious and clear, and not incumbered with too many divisions. As to this, his friend Dr. Stonehouse says, "I recollect that he preached without notes, excepting that he had before him a small leaf of paper, on which were written, in short-hand, the general heads and particulars of the sermon, which he sometimes looked at, and sometimes not. He was very regular in his plans, nor was he very long; from thirty to forty minutes was his usual time; rarely longer." His weakness rendering him, for several months before his death, incapable of speaking any length of time to his congregation, he shortened his discourses, and took a most useful method of inculcating his instructions. After he had expounded his text, and divided his sermon into two or three heads, he would speak briefly, and at the conclusion of each head, enforce what he had said by a pertinent text of Scripture, desiring his congregation to turn to their Bibles, and double down that text. "Now, (added he,) my dear brethren, if you forget my

sermon, you cannot forget God's word in this text, unless you wilfully throw aside your Bibles. Show this to your children, or the absent part of your family, when you return home. Ponder and pray over these portions of God's word; you will have abundant matter for edification." Then he gave a striking exhortation, and at the end of it, another text for them to double down; so that they had always three texts, in order to their finding of which, he paused in the pulpit. This method had another good effect; it obliged the generality to bring their Bibles along with them, for those who were without Bibles, lost the benefit of the texts, and were unemployed; while the great majority, who had their's, were busy looking for the texts referred to in the sermon. His method of catechising children in the church, and of speaking to them in private, was very engaging and useful. We give this in his own words:—"As to instructing children, my method is to ask them easy questions, and to teach them easy and short answers. The Lord's prayer was the subject of our last explanation. In some such manner I proceeded: Why is this prayer called the Lord's prayer? Because our Lord taught it.—Why is Christ called our Lord? Because he bought us with his blood. Why does he teach us to call God Father? That we may go to him as children to a father.—How do children go to God as a father? With faith, not doubting but he will give them what they want. Why our Father in heaven? That we may pray to him with reverence.—What is meant by God's name? God himself, and all his perfections.—What by hallowed? That he may be honoured and glorified.—How is God to be honoured? In our hearts, with our tongues, and by our lives, &c.

On such questions I endeavour to comprehend, not all that may be said, but that only which may be level to their capacities, and is most necessary for them to know. 'The answer to each question I explain in the most familiar manner possible, such a manner as a polite hearer might treat with the most sovereign contempt; I use little similes, that are quite low. In every explanation I would be short, but repeat it again and again; tautology in this case is the true propriety of speaking to our little auditors, and will be better than all the graces of eloquence.'

He would at these times ask such questions as were not only suitable to the words of the catechism, but also such as would most strike at the vices of his parishioners. Some of these having lain in bed on a Sabbath morning longer than he approved, others having been busy in foddering their cattle when he was coming to church, and several having frequented the ale-house, he thus catechised one of the children before the congregation:—"Repeat me the fourth commandment.—Now, my little man, do you understand the meaning of this command? Yes, Sir. Then, if you do, you will be able to answer me these questions: Do those keep the holy Sabbath day, who lie in bed till eight or nine o'clock in the morning, instead of rising to say their prayers, or read their Bibles? No, Sir. Do those keep the Sabbath who fodder their cattle when other people are going to church? No, Sir. Does God Almighty bless such as go to ale-houses on the Sabbath, and do not mind the instructions of their minister? No, Sir. Do those who love God, read the Bible in their families, particularly on Sabbath evening, and have prayers every morning and night in their houses?

Yes, Sir." A great variety of such pertinent questions he would frequently ask, in the most familiar and engaging manner, on every part of the catechism, as he thought most conducive to the improvement and edification of his people. Indeed, he seems to have paid peculiar attention to the lambs of the flock. We have many instances of this. To a friend he writes:—"Your dear little ones, the olive plants about your table, I trust are in a flourishing state. May the good Lord fulfil his gracious promises to them, and the children of your honoured neighbour. May he pour his Spirit upon your seed, and his blessing upon your offspring, that they may grow up (in knowledge and grace) as willows by the water courses." To another he says: "I have just been giving an exhortation to my young brethren: I have warned them to remember their Creator in the days of their youth. My thoughts were led to the subject by an alarming providence, which snatched away one of their companions in the gaiety of youth. May the hand of the Almighty set home the word of his ministers! May young persons come, in the vigour of health, to the feet of the Redeemer, and devote their warm affections to his service! And O may the preacher himself (then a young man) both lead them in the way, and encourage them to follow!"

As long as he was able, he catechised the children of his parishes in the summer season in the church, on the catechism, the creed, the ten commandments, and the Lord's prayer. He was much pleased with (as he says) some hopeful young people, who came together to visit him one afternoon. He introduced a discourse on growth in grace, and settled times for future conferences

with them on divine subjects. He used to recommend to them "Henry's Pleasantness of Religion," and "Jenk's Glorious Victory of Chastity." Of this last he says: "It is a pity that this piece is not more regarded by parents, as it is, perhaps, the best thing of its size ever written on the subject, and ought to be put into the hands of all young people." Having received a supply of Mason's small Catechisms, from his friend Mr. Ryland, he scattered them among his young people, saying: "Some such small evangelical treatises are much wanted." He particularly recommended to the young the Book of God. "I find, (he says) from an expression in your letter, that you read the New Testament in the original. Dear Sir, let that book be your bosom friend and your constant companion. Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? but by taking heed to himself, according to the doctrine and example of his most holy Redeemer." Again he writes: "My dear Sir, lay up a stock of comfort, get your graces lively, while animal nature blooms." To a young lady he writes; "I am pleased not a little to hear a lady of your blooming years declare, that an inquiry relating to everlasting salvation, has taken up much of her thoughts. Let me entreat you to go on and imitate that excellent woman, whose panegyric is uttered by wisdom and truth itself—'Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken from her.' " For the sake of young people, as proper historical furniture for their minds, he intended to write the most memorable and striking facts of the four ancient monarchies, calculated to explain the prophecies of Scripture, and demonstrate their exact accomplishment; with succinct details of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dis-

persion of the Jews. His bad health and death prevented this.

When he met with young people he would talk with them: sometimes he saw reason to reprove them (as when he saw them profaning the Sabbath, by playing at marbles, &c.) in his gentle way, telling them they had souls to be saved or lost. He talked with them familiarly about religion as a delightful employment; put easy questions to them; encouraged them occasionally by little presents, and thus taught them an amiable, cheerful, and generous piety. Indeed, he had a very happy method of gaining the attention of youth, and took great delight in talking with them; instances of which were long remembered by his people and domestics. It is well known that Mr. Hervey's health, in the concluding years of his life, was in a very shattered state; it was then his constant practice to take a daily airing on horseback, when the weather would permit. In a subordinate care of his health he did not forget his business of doing good. When he met with young persons in these excursions, he used to engage them in religious conversation, in a manner peculiarly prepossessing, urging them to attend to the one thing needful. When he perceived a disposition to attend to religion, he encouraged it by the gift of Bibles and other religious books suited to their age. The divine blessing, in repeated instances, rested upon his exertions; and these casual interviews were the means of making more than one thoughtful and permanently religious. One of the seals of Mr. Hervey's labours was alive in 1811. When a young man, at work in the neighbourhood of Weston, Mr. Hervey used often, in the course of his rides to visit him. He was

accustomed to dismount from his horse, hang the bridle on his arm, and in the most familiar and affectionate manner, recommend to him attention to the concerns of his soul. The young man was afterwards clerk to Mr. Hervey's successor. He, at the above date, was a member of the Baptist Church of Northampton; and acknowledged, with pleasure, that the recollection of Mr. Hervey's conversations had been highly beneficial to his spiritual interests. He has in his possession a Bible he received from Mr. Hervey. We only add, it is incalculable what benefits might result from ministers following the example of Mr. Hervey in this particular.

He did not confine his teaching to God's house, but he brought it home to people's dwellings, visiting them from house to house, agreeably to the apostle's pattern. His friend Dr. Doddridge hints, that Mr. Hervey was peculiarly diligent in this arduous part of ministerial duty. There he prudently and seriously inquired into the state of their souls, and their proceedings in their families; whether they were completely furnished with saving knowledge, and the means of it, the Book of God particularly, and whether they were careful to increase it, by allotting a daily portion of their time for reading the Scriptures; whether their children were catechised, and their servants instructed; whether they were constant in family worship, and at their closet-devotions; how they spent the Sabbath-day, &c. Into these, and other points of the like nature, he would prudently and kindly examine, and exhort them to amend what was amiss, and encourage them to persevere in that which was good. After he was unable to visit them at their own houses, he encouraged them to come to him, and to con-

verse freely on the subjects relating to their eternal interests; and on such occasions, he would speak with a force and propriety peculiar to himself. He also diligently, according to his ability, visited the sick. Withal, he took heed to himself. Though he sometimes met with ungrateful and provoking usage, he was usually meek, and, like his Master, returned blessing for cursing. Thus he says: "To overcome the perverseness of our people by unwearied kindness, to dissipate their blindness by incessant instructions, and to work out their vices by ceaseless, but tender persuasions; this is the true glory and excellency of a Christian minister; this is that happy spirit, and that truly pastoral practice, which, if I could obtain, I should bless the day wherein I was born." He was courteous and condescending, and would stoop with cheerfulness to the lowest person in his parish. He was not trifling or ludicrous, but affable and kind, seeking to please not himself, but his neighbours, for their good to edification. He maintained a uniform gravity of behaviour. Even his enemies confessed that his life was a fair and beautiful transcript of his doctrine, such as might remind men of, and be daily reinforcing, his instructions. As far as human infirmities did permit, he strove to be unblameable and unproveable, that he might renew the apostle's charge, "Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ;" and he could humbly make his appeal, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably, I have behaved myself among you." He endeavoured to leave a savour of the knowledge of Christ in every private company; and it appeared from all his conversation, that the affections of his heart, and the labours

of his life, were wholly devoted to the honour and interest of his adored Redeemer.

From the above it will appear that Mr. Hervey was a truly conscientious and diligent pastor. Among other causes of this, we may reckon his warm love to the souls of his people. This he expresses in the following words:—"I thank you for your affectionate wishes. I endeavour not to be behind hand with my people in the exercise of love. You are always on my heart, and often, often mentioned in my prayers, especially that you may be partakers of the Holy Ghost, and feel all those saving convictions which are described by our Lord, John xvi. 8—11; that you may be interested in the new covenant, and enjoy all those precious privileges which were purchased for us by our dying Saviour, and are recorded by his apostle, Heb. viii. 10—12. I accompany my former labours with my repeated prayers, and bear my little flock on my supplicating and affectionate heart all the day long. O that the gracious God may fulfil in them all the good pleasure of his will, and his work of faith with power. The way to secure the love of others, is to love them, to pray for them, and with a willing assiduity to set forward their true happiness. This, whenever I was among them, my people will confess, I did not cease to do. And the God of heaven knows I daily bear them on my heart, and often recommend them to the tenderest mercies of our everlasting Father.

At Mr. Whitefield's desire, and with his father's concurrence, Mr. Hervey went through the parish of Weston several times, and conversed with the people about the concerns of their souls; in these services he thought he had considerable success.

He also set up an evening catechetical lecture at Weston or Collingtree. On this he says: "I hope my evening assemblies are and will be prospered. I have had comfortable assurances that the sanctifying Spirit has been among us, and blessed my discourses to the edifying of the hearers. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift. I have some from two parishes beside our own that attend upon my little catechetical lecture; and if (as you say) I am to have some from Northampton also, what an important person will God Almighty make me!" In 1736 he left Oxford, and became his father's curate in Collingtree. Here he lived very happily. He says of the people, "They love me, and love my doctrine, and long for the pure milk of the word. O that their precious souls were as firmly united to Christ, as their favourable opinion is secured to me!" Having occasion to visit them, after he was settled at Weston, he remarks to a correspondent, "It would have pleased you to have observed how glad the honest folks were to see their old curate; and why were they glad? for no other reason, that I can conceive, but because I used to converse with them in private, just as I spoke to them from the pulpit, and endeavoured, at every interview, to set forward their eternal salvation. This I find is the grand secret to win the affections of a flock." He afterwards accepted the curacy of Dummer, in Hampshire. Here he lived among a poor illiterate people, where his friend Mr. Whitefield had been before. While in this place, the people of Collingtree sent him a pressing invitation to return, upon which he wrote them an excellent letter, as to the choice of a minister." Here he continued about twelve months, when he was invited to Stoke-Abbey, in Devonshire, the

seat of his worthy college acquaintance, Paul Orchard, Esq. In this pleasant place, and worthy family, he was very happy, and lived upwards of two years in great esteem and friendship. The following agreement between Messrs. Hervey and Orchard deserves preservation:—

Agreement between Paul Orchard, Esq. and Mr. Hervey.

“ We, the underwritten, whom God’s providence has wonderfully brought acquainted with each other, for the purposes, no doubt, of piety and everlasting salvation, sensible how blind and corrupt our nature is, how forward to fall into errors and iniquities, but how backward to discern or amend them; knowing also the great advantage of kind and affectionate, but, at the same time, sincere and impartial reproof and admonition, do oblige ourselves to watch over each other’s conduct, conversation, and tempers; and whenever we perceive any thing amiss therein, any duty ill done, or not done so well as it ought, any thing omitted which might be for our spiritual good, or practised which will tend to our spiritual hurt; in fine, any thing practised or neglected, which we shall wish to have been otherwise in a dying hour—all this we will watch to observe, never fail to reprove, and earnestly endeavour to correct in each other, that so we may have nothing to upbraid one another with when we meet in the eternal state. We resolve to do all this with the utmost plainness, and all honest freedom; and, provided it be done with tenderness, with apparent good will, and in private, we will esteem it as the greatest kindness we can show, the truest interest of sincere friendship that we can exercise, and the only way of answering the gracious ends of Almighty wisdom in bringing us to-

gether. In witness and confirmation of which resolution, we here subscribe our names,

“PAUL ORCHARD,

“JAMES HERVEY.

“November 28, 1738.”

While here, he was attacked with that weakness of constitution which never left him. He used to take excursions for his health into Cornwall; when, he says he saw the wondrous works of God, roaring seas and rugged rocks, stretching out to the ocean.

When Mr. Orchard's eldest son (to whom he dedicated the second volume of his *Meditations*) was to be baptized, he insisted that Mr. Hervey should be one of the godfathers, that he might have an eye to his Christian education. Through life he took a deep interest in the spiritual welfare of this family.* For the education of this young gentleman he was particularly anxious. So he writes to his mother: “Pray present my tender love and most affectionate blessing, to my dear little godson. I want to know how far he has got in his book; whether he is perfect in his catechism, and takes pleasure in offering up his prayers to God every night and morning? I hope he still remembers who it was that walked upon the sea (which Mr. Hervey probably had told him;) who it was that made him and all the world. I am delighted with your endeavours to bring him, like that illustrious youth celebrated by the apostle, acquainted with the Scriptures from a child. As he constantly reads the Psalms and chapters, I often think of him when our family is employed in the same manner, and breathe a humble petition, that the mercies implored, or the happiness promised, may not be my portion only, but his and your's.”

* See Letters published by Colonel Burgess.

He modestly desires her, often to endeavour to make him sensible of the greatness of God; that this glorious God sees him in every place; that he is to live but a very little while here below; that he is a sinner, and therefore unworthy of the heavenly felicity, but Christ Jesus has died for the pardon of his offences.

In 1740, he undertook the charge of Bideford, fourteen miles from Stoke-Abey, where he lived greatly beloved by all the people. His congregation was large, but his stipend was small; his friends, therefore, made a collection yearly, which raised his income to 60*l*. Yet this, with an allowance he had received from his father, was often insufficient for his support, owing to the unbounded benevolence of his disposition, which prompted him to give more than he could properly afford. This led some of his kind friends at Bideford to practise an innocent deception upon him, by borrowing money from him when he received his salary; this they kept till they knew Mr. Hervey stood in need of it, and then they returned it to him. Here he planned and partly executed his *Meditations and Contemplations*. His meditations among the Tombs, and the Reflections on a Flower Garden, were principally written at Bideford. It was a ride from that place to Kilhampton, in Cornwall, which suggested the former; and the latter were in part composed in the summer-house of a pleasant garden, belonging to the family with whom he lodged.

Upon his coming to Bideford, he says, "I find well disposed people in these parts; they have turned their faces Zion-ward, and seem to have a desire and longing to enter into the Jerusalem that is above. These persons are not displeased with

my company, and court my stay, if so, I may be a guide to them who seek Jesus who was crucified. O that I could admire the free condescending goodness of God! He has no need of a poor polluted worm; he has nobler ministers to perform his good pleasure; and will he magnify his grace by employing so vile an instrument? Will he execute his work, his most important and most glorious work, of converting souls, by the hand of a wretched sinner? O help me to adore his mercy!"

Here he began to preach evangelically. He had, at the different places where he was stationed before, preached in a legal strain; but in two sermons on Rom. v. 19, usually called at Bideford his Recantation Sermons, he plainly and delightfully avows his evangelical sentiments.* His conversation with some poor but very pious people about Bideford, was one cause of the change of his views.

In the discharge of his pastoral duties here, Mr. Hervey was very exemplary. He preached twice every Lord's day; and on Tuesdays and Fridays he took occasion to expound part of the first or second lesson, except when he catechised the children, and then he confined his instructions to a familiar explanation of the church catechism; the remainder of his time he devoted to study or conversation. His acquaintance was select; among them was a young man, who was son of the parish clerk, and a most excellent mathematician: his name was Doun. From him Mr. Hervey acquired a considerable knowledge of astronomy. He died at the age of twenty-four, and his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Hervey, who improved the

* Afterwards published by the late Rev. Mr. Toplady, in 1769, and now printed in his works.

melancholy occasion in a very affecting manner.* In this place he formed a religious society, which continued above forty years after his departure from Bideford. Here we may take occasion to observe, that, like his friend Mr. Walker, of Truro, he greatly encouraged such associations.—Writing to one of his Bideford friends, he remarks, “I am glad to find that you, and ———, and ———, often meet together, and like the people mentioned by the prophet, speak one to another of the things of God. O let us exhort one another to faith, love, and good works; and so much the more, as we see the day of eternal judgment approaching. Let me not be forgotten in your little society, when the Lord Jesus is in the midst of you, speaking peace to your consciences, showing you his hands and his side.” Meeting with some reproach for his activity in setting up these, he says, “As a fellow member of your meetings, and a joint engager in your schemes for reviving religion and a reformed age; a character I am so far from being ashamed of, that I am only ashamed of my scanty abilities to answer it, and of the poor inconsiderable assistance which I am able to contribute to so worthy an attempt.”

While in this place, the following incidents hap-

* The following notes of a sermon, preached on this occasion, deserve to be recorded:—“He that taught you to find your way through the trackless ocean, is himself passed into the invisible world, and landed on the eternal shores. He that taught you to speculate the skies, and observe the celestial bodies, is gone to a distance, vastly more remote and immeasurable than their’s. O that you would lay this his last remove to heart, as diligently as you did his principles of navigation, in your memory. The same change must take place in you; and, in a little time, you must make your last voyage.”

pened:—On a Sabbath-day, as he was preaching, (we use his own words,) a “boy came running into the church breathless and trembling. He told, but in a low voice, those who stood near, that a press-gang was advancing to besiege the doors, and arrest the sailors. An alarm was immediately taken. The seamen, with much hurry, and no small anxiety, began to shift for themselves. The rest of the congregation, perceiving an unusual stir, were struck with surprise. A whisper of inquiry ran from seat to seat, which increased by degrees into a confused murmur. No one could inform his neighbour; therefore every one was left to solve the appearance from the suggestions of a timorous imagination. Some suspected the town was on fire; some were apprehensive of an invasion from the Spaniards; others looked up, and looked round, to see if the walls were not giving way, and the roof falling upon their heads. In a few moments the consternation became general. The men stood like statues in silent amazement and unavailing perplexity: the women shrieked aloud, and fell into fits. Nothing was seen but wild disorder; nothing was heard but tumultuous clamour. The preacher’s voice was drowned: had he spoken in thunder, his message would scarcely have been regarded. To have gone on with his work, amidst such a prodigious ferment, had been like arguing with a whirlwind, or talking to a tempest. This brought to my mind that great tremendous day, when the heavens will pass away, when the earth will be dissolved, and all the inhabitants receive their final doom. If, at such incidents of very inferior dread, our hearts are ready to fail, what unknown and inconceivable astonishment must seize the guilty conscience, when the

hand of the Almighty shall open those unparalleled scenes of wonder, desolation, and horror: when the trumpet shall sound, the dead rise, the world be in flames, the Judge on the throne, and all mankind at the bar. Surely then, the main care of our lives should be to obtain peace and acceptance before the dreadful tribunal of God. And what is sufficient for this purpose but righteousness!—the most perfect obedience, and meritorious satisfaction of Christ, wrought for us, and applied to us?" Upon this he excellently improves and enlarges in *Theron and Aspasio*.

On March 2, 1741, he writes to a friend: "You have heard, I do not doubt, that Mr. Nichols, my rector, is no more; who will succeed him is yet a secret. Many, I believe, are eagerly wishing for it, as a place of considerable profit; and few, perhaps, solicitously considering whether they are equal to the discharge of so difficult and important a service. But hold my pen! what have I to do to judge others? let it be all my care to approve myself faithful in my appointed station." Here he was curate two years and a half, when he was dismissed by the new incumbent, against the united request of the parishioners, who offered to maintain him at their own expense. Mr. Hervey was uncommonly attached to this people, as they also were to him. While with them, he says, "I live in the very heart of the town. O that the town, and the immortal interests of its inhabitants may be ever on my heart; may I covet no other prosperity, and pursue no other happiness than to be an instrument of doing them some spiritual good, than to see my parishioners walking in the truth." Again he writes, "I wish you and Mrs. — abundance of edification from Mr. Erskine's

Sermons, which I sent you. I hope I shall never forget my dear people of Bideford; I shall bear them upon my heart when I retire into my study for reading, when I walk solitary in the fields for exercise, and when I bend my knees before the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." After he left Bideford, he sent his people many copies of his works; dispersed other religious books among them, sent to the poor liberal supplies of money, and the collection of Promises he had selected and printed. Of this he says, "We paste them at the beginning and end of our Bibles, that like a little vial of cordial drops, distilled from the well of life, they may be always at hand to refresh our souls, and enliven our faith."

In 1743, he returned to Weston-Favel, and officiated as curate to his father, at Collingtree.

In May 12, 1750, Mr. Hervey speaks with much pleasure of a visit he had from his friend Whitefield, either at Weston or Northampton. "This indefatigable preacher of the everlasting gospel delivered his message under the canopy of the skies, and in the midst of a numerous and attentive audience. Dr. Doddridge, Dr. Stonehouse, another doctor of physic, Dr. Hartley, a worthy clergyman, and your late curate, were on his right hand and on his left. The text was, 'Ye are the temples of the living God.' He showed himself a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. He dealt out to saints and sinners their portion in due season. All the hearers hung on his lips, and many were visibly impressed by the power of his doctrine. May the Omnipotent and Eternal Husbandman prosper the seed sown, and make it productive of sound faith and vital holiness." A little after his removal to

Weston, he writes to Mr. Orchard: "I am in my present situation like a person retired from the noise and hurry of a market, to the silence and rest of a recluse's cell. In the parish I now serve, I have not had so much occasional duty through the course of a whole year, as used to occur formerly in every week. My sphere of action is contracted, and only one talent committed to my charge; O that I may be faithful in this little! that one day I may receive my great Master's approbation, and be bidden to enter the joy of my Lord." Here we cannot help remarking the wisdom of Providence, in frequently placing men of superior abilities in small charges. Had Mr. Hervey been placed in a station more public and eminent than Weston-Favel, it is highly probable he would have been less diffusively useful. In this small charge he got time to compose his elaborate works, *The-ron and Aspasio*, and *Aspasio Vindicated*.

In June, 1750, his health being much impaired by his great attention to duty, and his friends judging that the change of air might be of benefit to him, they formed a design, which they executed, of conveying him to London, under a pretence of riding a few miles in a friend's post-chaise, who was going thither. Of this he pleasantly complains in a letter, upon his arrival there, which begins thus:

"My dear friend,

"If you chide, I must accuse. Pray where was your warrant, where your commission, to impress me into this journey? However, as a good Christian, I forgive you and your accomplices." After commending several clergymen, his friends, whom he saw on the road, he concludes thus: "My animal nature is so very feeble, that I can find no

benefit from the change of air, nor from the enjoyment of the most pleasant society." He remained in London from June, 1750, to April or May, 1752. During this period he writes to a friend; "I have been at or near London for more than a year, unable to execute the business of my ministerial office, and lingering away life, partly at my brother's, and partly among friends; inexpressibly obliged to a gracious Providence, that though incapable of earning any thing, I want no manner of thing that is good." While for almost two years in London, he appears to have been seldom employed in public work; indeed, the extreme weakness of his body rendered him quite unfit for it. But he was not idle; here he corresponded with some religious friends, composed his remarks on Bolingbroke's Letters, enlarged and corrected his Meditations, and wrote part of Theron and Aspasio. Being suddenly taken from his beloved charge, the parish of Collingtree, he sent them his advice in the following words:—"My departure from Northampton was sudden and unexpected: could I have seen my people, and given them my parting advice, it should have been in the words of that good man Barnabas, who exhorted all the disciples, that with purpose of heart they should cleave unto the Lord. Cleave, my dear friends, to the Lord Jesus Christ. Cleave to his word; let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, and be your meditation all the day long. Let the Bible, that inestimable book, be often in your hand, and its precious truths in your thoughts. Thus let us sit, with holy men, at the feet of Jesus, and I hope you will experience his word to drop as the rain, and distil as the dew. Cleave to his merits; fly to his divine blood for pardon, it is the fountain

opened for sin and for uncleanness. It purges from all guilt, and takes away all sin; and blessed be God, it is always open, always free of access. Fly to his righteousness; let us renounce our own, and rely on his obedience: what unprofitable servants are we! how slothful is our whole life! how imperfect in every work! But as for Christ, his work is perfect; it is complete, and infinitely meritorious. In this shall all the seed of Israel, all true believers, be justified, and in this shall they glory. Cleave to his Spirit; seek for the Divine Spirit. Cry mightily to God for the Divine Spirit. Let them that have it pray that they may have it more abundantly, and be even filled with the Spirit. This blessed Spirit reveals Christ, strengthens faith, quickens love, and purifies the heart. Christ died to obtain this Spirit for us; he intercedes for us, that we may receive it; and his heavenly Father, for his sake has promised, (O glorious privilege!) to give it more readily than a parent gives bread to a hungry child. Cleave to his example; study his holy life, eye his unblameable conduct, observe his amiable temper; look to this heavenly pattern, as those who learn to write look to their copy; and God grant that we all, with open face, beholding the glory of the Lord, may be changed into the same image from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord. Thus let us cleave to Christ the Lord—cleave with full purpose of heart, incessantly, closely, inseparably. Let us say with our father Jacob, I will not let thee go. In the happy, happy mansions above, may we, and many, very many of my dear flock, meet, and never be parted more.”

While in London, Mr. Hervey lodged for some time with his brother in Miles's-lane. There it

pleased his Heavenly Father to superadd to his other infirmities, a violent fever, which confined him for eight weeks, and brought him to the brink of the grave. On this occasion Mr. William Hervey, with whom he lodged, wrote as follows to one of his intimate friends:—"My brother is indeed an example of patience. He has not spoken, during the whole period of his severe illness, one single word of peevishness. I am persuaded he prays for you, now he lies sick upon his bed." Afterward, the family was visited with a very alarming providence; a fire broke out in a house which communicated with that of his brother. On this terrifying occasion, he caught such a cold (being obliged to wade through the water in order to escape the fire) as confined him to his chamber for several weeks. Of this event he remarks: "It put me in mind of that tremendous day, when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." One of the winters that he stayed in London, he lodged at the house of his good friend Mr. Whitefield, in Tottenham-court Road: here he was very happy. In a letter to Mrs. Whitefield, when at Bristol, he uses a little pleasantry, and writes to her: "This leaves your family in good health, and me, whom you appoint steward, like Gideon's soldiers, faint, yet pursuing; faint with bodily languors, but following after that amiable, adorable God, whose loving-kindness is better than life. We go on comfortably, want for nothing but your company. Mr. Cruttenden says, I live like a king, and dine every day in state. I tell him, No, I am nothing more than lord high-steward of your majesty's household; but since he will have it that

I am a monarch, I this day begin to act in character, and commanded and charged our trusty and well-beloved Robert Cruttenden, Esq. not to be wanting in his attendance on our royal person. I hope my friend's jest is a good omen. I hope we shall be kings to our God, and reign over the rebels within, and tread the world under our feet, and sit in heavenly places with our exalted and royal Head, Christ Jesus." To this he afterwards refers, in a letter to Mr. Whitefield: "I often think of the delightful winter I passed at the Tabernacle, think of that with pleasure, but with shame and anguish, on my non-improvement of such opportunities. O what could such a wretch do, without an all-sufficient, all-perfect, all-meritorious Saviour? Blessed be God for millions of mercies, but above all, blessed be his adorable name for Jesus Christ!" While in the Metropolis, he was visited by Dr. Gill, and declares it was his own fault, if he reaped not much advantage by his conversation. He also there, for the first time, heard Mr. Romaine. To his correspondent he gives an account of the text and sermon, and wishes much success to him in explaining the gospel to his thronged auditories.

Upon his father's death, May, 1752, Mr. Hervey returned to Weston. He mentions this to a friend in these words: "It has pleased God to take my father to himself; on which account I am obliged to remove to Northamptonshire, and, if I can bear the journey, and undergo the fatigue, to take the living of Weston. May it convince me more thoroughly that I am a stranger and a sojourner below! and may our affections be there, where our true home and everlasting inheritance lie!" Ere he entered on his ministry, as Rector there, he met with some distressing difficulties. He

says to a friend, "I am under the necessity of taking a living, though I am inexpressibly weak. See how thorny the world is, and how unkind its inhabitants; the surrogate has denied my mother the sequestration of the living, though she is patroness, and I am the heir. He has taken it to himself, not only without, but against, the consent of both the church-wardens. Pray for us, dear Sir, that we may be enabled to love our enemies, and do good and wish well to those who injuriously treat us." He applied to his diocesan, who favoured him; and he was soon after regularly inducted into the family-livings of Weston-Favel and Collingtree, in Northamptonshire. For a long time he was determined against being a pluralist, and refused to accept of Collingtree, or to qualify himself for it, insomuch that it was in danger of lapsing to the bishop; but at length, through the earnest and constant entreaties of his family and friends, who, unknown to him, had sent to, and procured from Oxford, the necessary certificates of his being a Bachelor of Arts, in order to his taking his Master's degree at Clare-hall, Cambridge, he was, after much importunity, prevailed on to comply with their requests. When he waited on Dr. Thomas, the then bishop of Peterborough, for institution to Collingtree, after he had been inducted into Weston, he said to him, "I suppose your Lordship will be surprised to see James Hervey come to desire your Lordship to permit him to be a pluralist; but I assure you, I do it to satisfy the repeated solicitations of my mother and sister." To a friend he writes on this subject: "Advised by my friends, importuned by my relations, and swayed by concern for the circumstances of a mother and sister, who live with me, I have been prevailed on

to take a second benefice." Mr. Hervey never had any preferment given him, nor ever solicited for any, but continued a curate till his father's death, when he took possession of the two family-livings (being within five measured miles of each other.) While many of his brethren hunted for lucrative livings, and higher stations in the church, he says, "I have no wish to be spoken of to the king, or the captain of the host. Of gold and silver, blessed be the Divine Providence, I have enough and to spare: like the Shunamite, I dwell among my own people, perfectly content with my station, and without a single wish for a higher." Mr. Hervey and his curate used to attend alternately, till his ill health confined him entirely to Weston-Favel: in this place he always resided. In the parish of Weston, his ministry seemed very unsuccessful; some persons locked up their pews, and would not attend, nor suffer others to occupy them; but while this was the case, he was very useful to multitudes all the country round. An excellent minister who lived in Northampton, Mr. Ryland, says, "I know many people in the neighbouring villages, who were converted under his ministry." Several of these came from a great distance. The aisles, and every other place in his church, where strangers might be, were crowded.

A worthy domestic, alive in 1811, related, that his usual visitors were the Rev. Messrs. Whitefield, T. Jones, Cudworth, Doddridge, Ryland, and a pious young man, a stone-mason; the lips of these righteous men fed one another; indeed few but religious persons called on him.

Mr. Hervey describes his situation at Weston in the following words:—"Weston is near Northampton, about two miles from the town, pleasantly

situated on an agreeable eminence, on the right side of the river, and a proper distance from the meadow. My house is quite retired; it faces the garden and the field, so that we hear none of the tumultuous din of the world, and see nothing but the wonderful and charming works of the Creator. O that I may be enabled to improve this advantageous solitude! Though secluded from the gay and busy scenes of life, may I ever be present with that divine Being who has heaven for his throne, and the earth for his footstool; whose mercy in Christ Jesus is like his majesty, exceeding great and infinite."

To his devout attentive mind, his garden turned preacher, and, as he says himself, "its blooming tenants were so many lively sermons." We have an instance of this in Theron and Aspasio: "Opposite to the room in which I write, is a most agreeable prospect of the gardens and the fields. These covered with herbage and loaded with corn; those adorned with flowers and abounding with esculents; all appearing with so florid and so beautiful an aspect, that they really seem, in conformity to the Psalmist's description, even to laugh and sing. Let me just observe, that all these fine scenes, all these rich productions sprung—from what? from the dissolution of the respective seeds. The seeds planted by the gardener, and the grain sown by the husbandman, first perished in the ground, and then the copious increase arose. Much in the same manner a true faith in Christ and his righteousness arises—from what? from the ruins of self-sufficiency, and the death of a personal excellency. Let me therefore entreat my Theron, still to keep an eye on the depravity of his nature, and the miscarriages of his life: the more clearly

we see, the more deeply we feel, our guilt and our misery, the more highly shall we value the obedience of our blessed Surety. In such a heart, faith will flourish as a rose, and lift up its head like a cedar in Lebanon," Writing also to Mr. Wesley, who opposed his exposition of James ii. 22—"By works was faith made perfect;" he says, "'Thus faith hereby answered its proper end, and appeared to be of the true, the scriptural kind, since it overcame the world, overcame self, and regarded God as all in all. Shall I send you to a familiar instruction? I view from my window a young tree. The gardener, when he planted it, told me it was a fruit tree, a pear tree, a right bearer *du Roy*; it may be such a tree, and have its respective fruit in itself; but this did not then appear. If, when autumn arrives, its branches are loaded with fruit, with pears, with that most delicious kind of pears, this will be a demonstration of all those properties; this will not make it such a particular tree, no, nor make it a good and fruitful tree, but only show it to be of that fine sort, and make its nature and perfections evident."

When his father's curate at Collingtree, he has been seen lying on his back in the church-yard, surveying the starry heavens through his telescope.

He gives us the following account of his entrance on the ministry, as rector, at Weston, in a letter to a friend:—"I did on the day you mention, ascend the pulpit, and speak for the space of half an hour to my people, but with so much weakness! It is well the eternal God does not want strength of lungs, or delicacy of elocution, but can do his work, his great work of converting souls, by the weakest, meanest instruments! If it was not

so, I must absolutely despair of being successful in my labour, or serviceable in my office. I opened my commission to my new parishioners, from these words of the blessed and only Potentate—Preach the gospel to every creature;—showed them what the gospel means, and what blessings it comprehends; by whom these were purchased, and to whom they are offered; exhorted them severally to secure to themselves a share in these unspeakable blessings; and gave them to understand, that the end of my preaching among them, the design of my conversation with them, and the principal aim of my whole life, would be to bring them acquainted with this delightful doctrine, and to assist them in obtaining the great salvation. I bless God for making my poor discourse acceptable to my hearers; and now I must beseech the bountiful Giver of all good, to make it beneficial to their souls.” In the beginning of his ministry here, he was much discouraged by the remarkable weakness of his constitution. So he writes; “My strength is so worn down, and my constitution so irreparably decayed, that it will be absolutely impossible for me to discharge my ministerial duty.” However, having obtained help of God, he preached the gospel to that parish more than six years and discharged all the duties of the ministry with much diligence. He wrote to Dr. Watts: “I have reason to thank you for your sacred songs, which I have introduced into the service of my church; so that, in the solemnities of the Sabbath, and in a lecture on a week-day, your music lights up the incense of our praise, and furnishes our devotions with harmony.”* This he also had done when

* Memoirs of Dr. Watts.

his father's curate at Collingtree. His hearers wished always for him to preach as long as he was able to perform divine service; he says in his last days: "I have not entirely given over my ministerial duty, because my parishioners have an affection for me, and rather choose to be content with one sermon on the Lord's day, and that delivered with much weakness, than to be assiduously attended, and more ably served, by a stranger. To them, perhaps, my languid looks may preach, and even my enfeebled voice have a peculiar strength, from the consideration, that the minister who is now standing before their eyes, and addresses their ears, must ere long, be seen and heard no more."

At Weston, many strangers attended his ministry, many from the villages around, from Northampton, and even from London: these last lodged in Northampton. Two months after his settlement in Weston, he received institution to Collingtree as its rector. Here the Rev. Moses Brown was his curate for several years. This gentleman was afterwards vicar of Olney and Chaplain of Morden College; he was a person of eminent piety, strict evangelical views, and an amiable disposition. He was author of two poetical pieces, an *Essay on the Universe*, and *Sunday Thoughts*; also, at Mr. Hervey's desire, he translated Zimmerman's *Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ*. He speaks of Mr. Hervey in the following terms:—"My acquaintance with that pious and amiable man, and accomplished author of *Meditations*, and *Theron and Aspasio*, had been only at a distance, and epistolary, till my coming, in the year 1753, to be his curate at Collingtree, and settling soon hereupon in his neighbourhood; this drew on the peculiarly endeared intimacy there was between us, that continu-

ed till his death, in which intervals of some years (the happiest that have been given to my life) I had frequent and fresh opportunities of his pleasant, always edifying conversation, and the advantage of partaking of many of his private hours and thoughts." Of his induction there, Mr. Hervey writes to a correspondent, August 18, 1752: "On Sunday I gave my new charge my first sermon. O that God may give both it and them his heavenly benediction! The text was taken from that noble declaration of the apostle, in which he adores his God, and congratulates himself upon the unspeakable privilege of being a minister of the gospel! 'To me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,' Eph. iii. 8."

Man is not born, either the first or second time, for himself only. He is a member of the public, and ought to do all the good he can to others. This Mr. Hervey well knew; and the love of God and men being eminently shed abroad in his heart, it was fertile of good designs. On the subject of Christian benevolence, he says, "I believe the world has a notion that I am a dignified, or a benefited man at least. Dear Sir, (says he, to his correspondent,) may it be your benefice and mine, to do good to souls, and our highest dignity to glorify the ever-blessed Redeemer, who, for our sakes, had not where to lay his head, till he was numbered with transgressors, and laid in the silent grave."* "Ecclesiastical preferment—preferment! Yes, if rightly understood, it is rightly so called; for what can be a more honourable office than to

* Gen. Col. Let. 92.

labour for Christ; to spend and be spent for Him whom heaven and earth adore; who yet was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him? O that my brethren and I may understand the word preferment in this truly precious and noble sense!"* "To save souls is the noblest acquisition in the world, infinitely more desirable than to find great spoil. May this be my continual aim."

Mr. Hervey was engaged in contriving and encouraging schemes to do good in behalf of the souls of men: "I caused lately (says he) to be printed, for the benefit of my people, a little collection of Scripture promises. I would have them pasted into their Bibles, and other pious books, that they may not be lost, but always at hand; and may the God of all grace command them to be mixed with faith, and ingrafted into their hearts. Perhaps some of your friends may not disdain this spiritual nosegay, because, though little, it is culled from the garden of God. I may also say, they will be a cordial to a believer, when all the delicacies imported by shipping lose their agreeable relish; they will be a portion to him, when all the treasures acquired by commerce are taking their everlasting flight." He enclosed this list in letters to his friends.

To a judicious and holy clergyman (probably Mr. Walker of Truro,) he writes: "I should much wish to see from your pen two or three lively animated forms of morning and evening prayer, with clear and short directions how to pray aright, and a proper method of daily self-examination. This, printed in a half-penny pamphlet, we might give away to any body, to every body indeed; and if

* Letter, Gospel Magazine.

one in twenty, or even one in fifty, proved successful, our pains and expense would be abundantly recompensed. We should also have some handle to lay hold on hypocritical self-deceiving souls: we might say, Neighbour, have you got these prayers by heart? Do you constantly use them, and examine yourselves daily by these questions?"

The county hospital of Northampton, he, along with his friends, Dr. Stonehouse and Dr. Doddridge, greatly encouraged: while he was able, he visited the patients, and gave them suitable directions. To the last mentioned friend, he writes: "I heartily applaud the zeal you show for the spiritual welfare of the patients of the Northampton infirmary. It would be an inestimable favour, if, by the blessing of God, it might be productive of a reformation in the persons whom it admits and discharges. As distressed objects will in all probability resort to it from all parts of the country, a change wrought in their hearts, and a renewal begun in their lives, will be a happy means of diffusing religion far and near. I hope the clergy concerned in the management of the infirmary will, with delight and assiduity, concur in the prosecution of so desirable an end. I can promise for one, so far as God shall give me ability. I wish some proper scheme was contrived for the execution of this design, in which I might bear some little part, without giving umbrage to my brethren, or alarming their jealousy. I have sometimes thought of giving the patients a kind of lecture or exhortation once a week, formed on some one or other of those Scripture mementos on the walls, but am somewhat doubtful whether such a proposal would meet with acceptance. Sometimes checked by the infirmities of my constitution, I have hitherto neglected to

mention the affair; however, I now venture to submit it to your consideration: to this, or any other advisable method, I should very readily contribute the best of my assistance.”*

To a clergyman he writes: “Let me beg of you to direct me to the most improving books you have met with. No longer ago than yesterday, a young clergyman, whom I had never seen before, made me a visit, and attended a lecture which I give my parish in Weston church, on a Wednesday evening, at seven o’clock: an amiable gentleman truly! He seems mighty well inclined; wonders that his brethren do not make edifying subjects, such as justification and sanctification, the favourites of their discourse. Now I do not know what more substantial service I could do such a person, than to recommend to his study some evangelical author, with a little sketch of his character and distinguishing excellency, which might be a blessing to others, and a blessing to himself.”† “I should be much obliged, if you would let me know what are some of the most valuable books which you have met with, on various subjects of importance; what little treatises most proper to be put into the hands of illiterate people; what are some of the most improving and judicious compositions in biography; what the most sound and weighty authors that might be recommended to young students of divinity.”‡ “Methinks, if a subscription to modernize valuable authors, and thus rescue them from the pit of oblivion, was properly set on foot by some men of eminence, and the proposals well drawn up, it would meet with due encouragement. I have often wondered that such an attempt has never yet been

* Gen. Col. Let. 27.

† Ibid. 149.

‡ Ibid. 112.

made. How many excellent books of the last century are now out of print, while such a number of useless and pernicious writings are continually published!"* "I wish some judicious hand would give us the quintessence of Dr. Owen's works, each in a size both portable for the pocket and the memory. I really think it would be one of the most substantial acts of service which a scholar or divine could perform for the present age." He urges his correspondent (Mr. Ryland) to think of executing it: "I cannot but think it would be a profitable employ for young students in divinity, to exercise themselves in abridging Caryl on Job, Owen on the Hebrews, Charnock on the Attributes, or some such valuable, but voluminous authors. These and many other works of the same luxuriant growth, would, if put into the alembic, afford us the very spirit of the gospel, and the richest cordial for our souls."†

He did much good in recommending religious treatises, little known had it not been for his warm commendations. He also diligently dispersed religious tracts among his friends, and among the poor, the careless, the weak, and afflicted.

He encouraged, by his influence and his purse, societies for promoting the gospel, both at home and abroad. The following directions, given by him, most likely took place in his own practice:—"For reformation in swearing, lying, sabbath-breaking, passionate and unchaste persons, you may write, (or keep by you printed) hints on slips of paper against either of these vices, and place them in the way of such persons, either by putting them in their books, windows, or other places,

* Gen. Col. Let. 209. † Note to *Aspasio Vindicated*.

provided you do not care to give them to the person yourself, or they may be sent by post.”*

In attempts to do good, he used also to take hold of any suitable occasion, and write a religious letter to his friends. This is evident in his numerous letters. We only select a few instances.

His friend, Dr. Stonehouse, having fallen from his horse, he sends him the following advice:—“Let me exhort you to live as on the borders of eternity, and often to reflect where the late fall from your horse might have hurried you. Eternity is at hand; He that cometh will come, and will not tarry. O that your soul may prosper! but it cannot prosper unless the world be under foot, and your affections fixed on Jesus; what besides him deserves a thought?”

To one looking toward the ministry, he writes: “Worldly craftiness is a bad guide, I wish you may have religious discretion for yours, and that, instead of paying court to the great, you begin to court souls for the everlasting Bridegroom; this is your true interest, and will avail you when every worldly consideration will be found ineffectual.”

To a physician, about using means for the spiritual welfare of his patients, he writes: “I greatly wish those in the practice of physic would study St. Paul as well as Hippocrates, and attend occasionally to the spiritual wants of their patients, when they are consulted as to their bodily disorders. This would be endeavouring to copy after the pattern of the compassionate Physician of mankind, who, while he cured the body, cured the soul. Being totally and continually silent at the patient’s bed-side, is, I think, denying, or in some

* Hints concerning promoting religion.

measure being ashamed of the Redeemer, who bought us with his blood: is it not, as it were, refusing to embark in his cause? How many such might be improved and comforted by a physician, without any hindrance to his prescriptions, detriment to his character, or loss of his time! The sick would long remember the words of their physician, if he would now and then drop occasionally a few religious hints, or a striking sentence or two, with propriety and seriousness."

Among the instances of his benevolence, we may mention his visiting condemned criminals in Northampton jail, which, to one under his relaxed state of health, was an eminent labour of love. We have an instance of this, August 8, 1747: "I visited the poor condemned malefactor; found him an ignorant person; aimed chiefly at these two grand points, to convince him of the heinousness of his sin, and show him the all-sufficiency of the Saviour to obtain pardon for the vilest of offenders." When, through weakness, unable to visit two prisoners in 1755, he wrote them a suitable letter.

Being a rich partaker of the Spirit of Jesus, who in all his people's afflictions is afflicted, he could say in some measure, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" To the afflicted he administered comforts and directions suited to their situation.

Even with those who maltreated him he sympathized. So he writes a friend: "The tenant, whose mother you saw at my house, continues obstinate and revengeful to the very last, and will leave me no possibility of getting my money for the time past, or my land for the time to come, but only by arresting him and throwing him into jail; and this I cannot be prevailed on to do. It would

grieve me extremely, that a man who has a wife and two small children, lies in a prison confined by my orders."

Among many instances of his compassion to the afflicted, we have the following from his own hand, to an intimate:—"Soon after I received your favour, a messenger came from London, bringing us the alarming news that my youngest brother was extremely ill. Upon me the office fell of taking the journey; feeble and languid as I was, there was no rejecting such a call. Accordingly, I took coach, and in two days arrived safe in London, where I found my poor brother seized with a most violent fever. After attending his sick-bed for several days, I had the melancholy task of closing his dear eyes, and resigning him up to death. Scarcely was I returned to Weston, but another awful providence fetched me from home. My very worthy physician, Dr. Stonehouse, had the misfortune to lose an amiable and excellent wife. At this valuable friend's house, I was desired to abide some time, in order to assist in writing letters for him, and despatching his necessary affairs, in comforting him concerning the deceased, and (if the will of God be so) in endeavouring to improve the awakening visitation to our mutual good."

To a dying Christian at Bideford, he says: "So you are going to leave us: you will be at your eternal home before us! I heartily wish you an easy, a comfortable, and a lightsome journey. Fear not; He that died upon the cross will be with you, when you walk through the valley of the shadow of death. People that travel often sing by the way, to render their journey more pleasant. Let me furnish you with a song, most exactly and most charmingly suited to your purpose: Who

shall lay any thing to my charge? It is God that justifieth me; who is he that condemneth me? It is Christ that died for me; yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for me. Shall the law lay any thing to my charge? That has been fully satisfied, by the obedience and death of my divine Lord. Shall sin condemn me? That hath been borne, all been abolished by the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. Shall Satan accuse me? What will that avail, when the Judge himself justifies me? The Judge himself pronounces me righteous.—See Rom. viii. 33, 34; Gal. iii. 13; 1 Pet. ii. 24; Dan. ix. 24; John i. 29. But shall I be pronounced righteous, who have been and am a poor sinner? Hear what the Holy Ghost saith: Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. What reason have they to be ashamed, who have neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any blemish? And such will be the appearance of those who are washed in Christ's blood, and clothed in his righteousness; they will be presented faultless, and with exceeding joy. Eph. v. 25—27; Jude 24."

Knowing the grace of our Lord Jesus, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, he abounded in acts of beneficence to the needy; and in this he consulted the interests of the soul by good advice, as well as those of the body. He applied to physicians in the behalf of the sick. He frequently petitioned such physicians as he apprehended to be charitably disposed, to give their advice occasionally, when they rode through a town, to such poor persons as the clergyman of

the place, or some respectable inhabitant, should recommend as real objects of compassion. With great pleasure, then, and with as much gratitude to the physician as if done for himself, he would defray the expense of what medicines were wanted.

He also gave away a great number of religious books, with suitable instructions how to use them, and especially Bibles. In the blank leaf of these he frequently wrote something suited to make an impression, or else stuck in a printed tract.

His charity to his hearers, the poor colliers about Collingtree, in respect of both soul and body, was almost boundless. All the profits of his Meditations, amounting to £700, he expended in charity. "This (said he) I have devoted to God. I will on no account apply it to any worldly uses. I write not for profit, nor for fame, but to serve the cause of God; and as he hath blessed my attempt, I think myself bound to relieve the distresses of my fellow-creatures with the profits that come from this quarter." He was not willing his charity should die with him, for he ordered all the profit arising from the future sale of his books to be constantly applied to charitable purposes. He chose rather to clothe the poor, than give them money. He used to get some judicious person to buy linen, coarse cloth, stockings, shoes, &c., at the best rate, alleging that the poor could not buy so good a commodity at the little shops, and with small sums of money—and adding, "I am God's steward for his poor, and I must husband the little pittance I have to bestow upon them as well as possible." But where money would be particularly serviceable to a family long afflicted with sickness, or to a prudent housekeeper, who had met with great losses in trade, he would give five, ten, or

fifteen guineas. He interested himself much for his worthy friend Moses Brown. He writes:—"With £50 a year, as curate of Olney, Mr. B. has, I think, thirteen children. One is settled in the world, and a friend of his has taken another for his clerk, gratis. We propose to put out one of his daughters to some decent business, by which she may have the means of getting her livelihood. He has been at a great expense, poor man, by the sickness of his family. We have put one of Mr. Moses Brown's children apprentice to a handsome business; and it will be a pleasure to do so worthy a man all the service that lies in my power." He wrote a large and warm recommendation of Burnham's Pious Memorial, as a piece of charity to his distressed widow. Among other instances of his charity, he proposed to buy a slave, to instruct him in the Christian religion: thus he writes his friend Mr. Whitefield, who, in America, had opportunity to make this purchase: "When you please to demand, my brother will pay you £30, for the purchase of a negro; and may the Lord Jesus Christ give you, or rather take for himself, the precious soul of the poor slave." Mr. Whitefield answers the above, and says, "I think to call your intended purchase Weston, and shall take care to remind him by whose means he was brought under the everlasting gospel." He offered a yearly allowance to a poor student attending the academy of Mr. Ryland.

In another letter, he says, "My money is Christ's, and I only desire he will give me benevolence to bestow it willingly, and grace to bestow it prudently."*—"I forbear every unneces-

* Gen. Col. Let. 178.

sary expense, and want many of the little conveniences of life, that I may succour the worthy servants of Christ.”*—“I see so much indigence, and so many distressed objects, that I begrudge myself all unnecessary disbursements of money. Who would indulge too much even in innocent and elegant amusements, and thereby lessen his ability to relieve, to cherish, and comfort the Lord Jesus in his afflicted members?”†

While Mr. Hervey was so charitable to the poor, and upon Christian principles, he acted with prudence and discretion. To a friend he writes in the following terms:—“I think a guinea is fully enough for giving away to a person whose character we are ignorant of. There are too many to whom an alms, in the way of money, is only an administration of fuel to their lusts; not that I presume to fix such a charge upon the present petitioner, yet this conviction makes me cautious, where I have no assurance of the person’s sobriety. Had it not been for his father’s worth, I should have almost thought it my duty to have shut my hands, till I had received some more satisfactory recommendations. We are stewards of our Master’s goods, and discretion is requisite in the discharge of such an office, as well as fidelity.”—“In your last, you asked me for two guineas out of my private purse, for our very deserving and very distressed friend. Indeed it is quite exhausted, but I have agreed to go halves with Rivington in the profits of my book; and I always make it a maxim not to give till I have gotten. If the Lord please to prosper my work, I will very readily communicate.”

Mr. Hervey wished, by occasion of his external

* Gen. Col. Let. 80.

† Ibid. 197.

charity, to recommend Jesus to his fellow-men. So he writes a friend: "I am glad the little money I left in your hand had not been remitted, if it may be a means of cherishing one of the least of our Redeemer's brethren. You did right in delivering a guinea to Mrs. ———, for the benefit of poor widow C. If M. L. or B. P. are in want, by all means let them be relieved. Tell them I present each of them with a crown, and be pleased to give it them in my name, assuring them that I give it with the utmost readiness; and bid them think, if a poor mortal, a wretched sinner, is so ready to help them, according to his ability, how much more ready is the infinitely compassionate Saviour of the world to pity all their miseries, and comfort them in all their troubles! If poor dust and ashes has a heart to pity, how inconceivably more willing is the fountain of love, the adorable Friend of sinners, to hear their prayers, and fulfil all their desires! Were it in my power, I would willingly do more for them; but let them remember, that the power of the blessed Jesus knows no limits. Perhaps my poor friends may feel themselves a little inclined to love the giver of such a mite. If they should feel themselves so disposed, O let them consider what reason they have to adore and love their most merciful Redeemer! Their friend never shed his blood for them, never laid down his life for them; but Jesus who reigns in glory, did both for their sake."*

A day before he died, when he was reduced to such extreme weakness, as to be unable to read, and could with difficulty speak, a small account being settled with him by a friend, as the balance

* Evangelical Magazine, Vol. 10.

of which he received eighteen shillings; looking on the money with great indifference, he expressed himself to this effect:—"I would gladly dispose of this small sum in such a manner as may do most good. It is the only act which I now am, and probably the last which I shall be, able to perform. Give yourself the trouble (says he to a friend) of looking among these books, and you will find Mr. Richard's pamphlet; at the latter end of which are, in manuscript, I remember, some hints concerning the means of promoting religion in ourselves and others, which (with some additions and improvements, which you might easily make) will not fill more than half a sheet of paper, and if stuck up, or framed, might be particularly useful in that form. Let, then, such a number be printed and given away, as this money will admit of." It was always his desire to die just even with the world. "I will be my own executor," said he; and, as he died on Christmas-day, his fund expired almost with his life. What little remained, he desired might be given to the poor at that severe season.

Mr. Hervey's heart was entirely devoted to the interests of his Redeemer, and drawn out with peculiar affection to all his followers, especially the most holy, zealous and active. Mere names of parties were not of great account with him; the precious truth of evangelical doctrine was his pearl; where he found it, there his heart was knit. He says, on this point, "I reckon it a singular blessing, that the spirit of prejudice and party zeal falls away, and we can converse together as brethren, though we worship the great Parent of all in different assemblies."—"Be not ashamed of the name Puritan; they were the soundest preachers, and I

believe the truest followers of Christ.”—“For my part, I esteem the Puritans as some of the most zealous Christians that ever appeared in our land.” “To settle faith on its proper basis, the meritorious righteousness of the Redeemer, and to deduce obedience from its true origin, the love of God shed abroad in our heart; to search the conscience, and convince the judgment; to awaken the lethargic, and comfort the afflicted soul, and all from a thorough knowledge joined to a masterly application of the Divine word; these are real excellences; these, if we may credit history, entered into the preaching, these, if we examine impartially, are to be found in the writings of the Puritans.” He particularly prized them as maintaining his favourite doctrine of imputed righteousness. “The Puritans, one and all of them, glory in the righteousness of their great Mediator, they extol his imputed righteousness in almost every page, and pour contempt on all other works compared with their Lord’s; for my part, I know no set of writers in the world so eminently remarkable for this doctrine and diction; it quite distinguishes them from the generality of our modern treatises. He mentions particular divines, and says: “Dr. Owen, with his correct judgment and immense fund of learning; Mr. Charnock, with his masculine style and inexhaustible vein of thought; Dr. Goodwin, with sentiments eminently evangelical, and a most happy talent at opening, sifting, and displaying the hidden riches of Scripture; these, I think, are the first three. Then comes Mr. Howe, nervous and majestic, with all the powers of imagery at his command; Dr. Bates, fluent and polished, with a never ceasing store of beautiful similitudes; Mr. Flavel, fervent and affectionate, with a masterly hand at

probing the conscience and striking the passions; Mr. Caryl, Dr. Manton, Mr. Pool, with many others, whose works will speak for them ten thousand times better than the tongue of panegyric, or the pen of biography. You are not ignorant of my sentiments with regard to our dissenting brethren. Are we not all devoted to the same supreme Lord? Do we not all rely on the merits of the same glorious Redeemer? By professing the same faith, the same doctrine which is according to godliness, we are incorporated into the same mystical body; and how strange, how unnatural would it be, if the head should be averse to the breast, or the hands inveterately prejudiced against the feet, only because the one is habited somewhat differently from the other? 'Though I am steady in my attachment to the Established Church, I would have a right hand of fellowship and a heart of love ever ready, ever open, to all the upright evangelical dissenters.'" Having desired a friend to transmit his most cordial affection to a dissenting minister, he adds: "I dearly love him, and rejoice in the expectation of meeting him in the everlasting kingdom of our dear Redeemer. How inconsiderable, what a perfect nothing, is the difference of preaching in a cloak, or in a gown, since we both hold the same Head, both are united to the same Saviour, and have access by the same Spirit to the Father. I assure you his name has been mentioned in my poor intercessions, ever since he favoured me with his friendly edifying epistle. Tell him I am making some faint attempts to recommend to the world a doctrine which is music to his ears, and better than a cordial to his heart."* To the same pur-

* Gen. Col. Let. 61.

pose he writes: "Be it so, that in some parts several of our brethren dissent; let us all live amiablely and sociably together, for we harmonize in principles. Let us join in conversation and intermingle interests, discover no estrangement of behaviour, cherish no alienation of affection; if any strife subsist, let it be to follow our Divine Master most closely, in humility of heart and unblameableness of life; let it be to serve one another most readily in all the kind offices of a cordial friendship."

Mr. Hervey attained much of the meekness and gentleness of Christ, and was a person of refined manners. He apprehended the modern sentiment, that politeness and religion were inconsistent, and grace and good breeding irreconcilable, was an artifice of our grand enemy to bring the best of causes into disrepute; he therefore cultivated true politeness. In the mean time, he, on proper occasions, honestly and plainly reprov'd sin. Dining with one of his respected friends, Mr. Hervey observed him utter a profane expression. He did not think it prudent, before his family, to reprove him; but soon after, in a letter to him, he has the following hints:—"I fancy, my dear friend, you did not take notice of an unbecoming expression which dropped from your lips while I sat at your table. You were a little chagrined at the carelessness of your servant, and said to him, with some warmth, What in the name of God do you mean? Such expressions from your mouth will be much observed, and long remembered. I need say no more; you yourself will perceive, by a moment's reflection, how faulty they are in themselves, how pernicious they may be to others. May the good Lord pardon and deliver you from evil, and may both of us

meditate on that text, 'Set a watch before our mouths, and keep the door of our lips.' "

The following striking anecdote of Christian faithfulness is related of him. In it we have evidence of the prudence and efficacy of his admonitions. Being once on a journey, a lady, who happened to be in the same carriage, was expatiating in a particular manner on the amusements of the stage, as in her esteem superior to any other pleasures. Among other things, she said there was the pleasure of thinking on the play before she went, the pleasure she enjoyed while there, and the pleasure of ruminating on it in her bed at night. Mr. Hervey, who sat and heard her discourse without interrupting her, when she had concluded, said to her, in a mild manner, that there was one pleasure more, besides what she had mentioned, which she had forgot. "What can that be?" said she; "for surely I have included every pleasure, when I considered the enjoyment beforehand, at the time, and afterwards. Pray, Sir, what is it?" Mr. Hervey, with a grave look, and in a manner peculiar to himself, replied, "Madam, the pleasure it will give you on your death-bed." A clap of thunder, or a flash of lightning, would not have struck her with more surprise: the stroke went to her very heart. She had not one word to say, but, during the rest of the journey, seemed quite occupied in thinking upon it. In short, the consequence of this well-timed remark was, that she never after went to the play-house, but became a pious woman, and a follower of those pleasures which would afford her true satisfaction even on a death-bed.

Mr. Hervey particularly enjoyed pious conversation; he seems to have sought out the company of the serious, wherever the hand of the Lord led

him. His great humility made him respect the sentiments of others; while his happy talent of securing openings for introducing religious hints, or improving on those of others, rendered his conversation at once entertaining and edifying. From Bath he writes: "There are found, in this loose and luxurious city, those who hunger and thirst after Christ and his righteousness. To them the pleasures of the world, which encircle them on every hand, are as dross and dung, in comparison of the Saviour's love." In other conversation he was often disappointed. "When I have been asked," says he, "to spend an afternoon with gentlemen of a learned education and unquestionable ingenuity, I have fancied myself invited to take a turn in some beautiful garden, where I expected to have been treated with a sight of the most delicate flowers and most amiable forms of nature, when, to my surprise, I have been shown nothing but the most worthless thistles and contemptible weeds.

"For my part, when Christ and his righteousness are the subject of conference, I know not how to complain of prolixity; I feel no weariness, but rather delight to talk of them without ceasing." In Christian conversation he often used to select a text of Scripture, and speak from it; he would sometimes modestly secure a conversation of this kind to himself. So, mentioning to Dr. Stonehouse, Col. i. 11, he writes to him: "If you live to give me an hour's conversation, this verse and the preceding would furnish us with a most pleasing and improving subject of discourse; the correctness, the propriety, the energy of the inspired supplications are admirable."

Mr. Hervey writes to a friend: "I have lately seen that most excellent minister of the ever bles-

sed Jesus, Mr. Whitefield. I dined, supped, and spent the evening with him at Northampton, in company with Dr. Doddridge and two pious clergymen of the Church of England, both of them known to the learned world by their valuable writings; and surely I never spent a more delightful evening, or saw one that seemed to make nearer approaches to the felicity of heaven. A gentleman of great worth and rank in town invited us to his house, and gave us an elegant treat; but how mean was his provision, how coarse his delicacies, compared with the fruit of my friend's lips! they dropped as the honey-comb, and were a well of life."

As a letter writer, Mr. Hervey certainly ranks among the first in that department. His epistles largely partake of the simplicity, freedom, and familiar conversation becoming letter writing. We see him, as it were, opening his bosom to his Christian friends, and expressing himself with all the tenderness and warmth of an affectionate brother! Mingled with singular modesty, his letters often convey the sound heartfelt experience of the real Christian. Every incident is improved to some religious purposes, and his thoughts took naturally a pleasant turn, in speaking of the most common things, if applied to his dear Saviour. He writes to the afflicted, both in body and mind, many consolatory letters. He defends and explains several of the leading truths of the everlasting gospel. He directs, in almost all cases of the Christian life, his correspondents, who gladly sought his advice; and when he felt it necessary to administer reproof or warning, he does not fail to do it, though performed with Christian mildness. He does not shrink back from the painful duty; his wounds are

those of a friend, and well fitted to answer their salutary design. His letters were prayed over, and were certainly useful to those to whom he originally sent them, and still are precious and useful as a Christian directory. They are also a pattern for religious letter writing; endowed as he was, with qualities which rendered his correspondence so valuable and pleasant, it is a matter of thankfulness that he was led to write so many friendly and Christian letters.

Mr. Hervey, in social intercourse, was distinguished for a suavity of manners which was peculiarly engaging, being modest, affable, polite, and gentle. He also possessed the Christian affection of sincere and warm friendship. 'This happy disposition is owned by his friends, and appears in his letters. We know he was candid in a high degree, and his candour might make him, particularly in his early days, think better of some men than they deserved. In the mean time, he laid it down as a rule, not to associate with any as a friend, in whom the following infirmities were predominant:—1. If he be reserved, or be incapable of communicating his mind freely. 2. If he be proud of his knowledge, imperious in his disposition, and fond of imposing his own sentiments upon us. 3. If he be positive, and will dispute to the end, by resisting the clearest evidence, rather than be overcome. 4. If he be fretful and peevish, ready to take things in a wrong sense. 5. If he affect wit on all occasions, and is full of his conceits, puns, quibbles, jests, and repartees. 6. If he carry about him a sort of craft and cunning, and a disguise, acting rather as a spy than a friend.

One who knew him well says, "He had the least of a party spirit of any man I ever knew.

He practised a kind of forgetting himself, in order to be agreeable to others, yet in so delicate a manner, as scarcely to let you perceive that he was so employed. He gave himself no airs of superiority, but was always on a level with his company." Another friend writes of him: " His unfeigned love to the evangelical doctrine of free salvation and eternal life, given in Christ Jesus to the most guilty, was the basis of that Christian friendship which subsisted between us. 'The first letter I received from him was of such a nature, that I could not but say, as soon as I received it, 'The Lord has graciously given me a friend for the truth's sake, and this will be a friend until death. 'This hath proved a truth; for as it began, so it continued. 'The truth, the despised, the valuable and important truth, was at the bottom of all his regard. He was not a barely complaisant, but a faithful friend, such as would not listen to the false suggestions and idle whispers of any who, thinking his regard an honour to me, would strive to break it off. In this I proved that he who loved his Master, loved his cause, and passing by the distinctions made in the world, loved Jesus in his witnesses and members."

In his friendship, he always regarded the highest, the eternal interest of his friends. Nothing can be more amiable, and at the same time more dignified, than this fidelity, in what he esteemed the duty of friendship. To his benefactress, Mrs. Orchard, he writes: " Indeed you do me too great an honour, in vouchsafing to thank me for my letters. I esteem it a favour, if you will permit me to remind you of serious and everlasting things; and might these epistolary remembrances stir up in my benefactress's mind a more hearty concern for her precious soul, with joy I would reflect on

them in my last moments. I fear I presume sometimes, and make too bold with your condescending goodness; but if I write freely and plainly, in a pressing or importunate manner, impute it, for it is wholly owing, to my zeal for your spiritual welfare. It is because I long, earnestly long, to see that generous person one day crowned with eternal glory, who has showed such respect, and exercised such kindness to me. If I tell her of the sinfulness and corruption of our nature, it is only that she may be cleansed and healed by Divine grace. If I speak of the worthlessness and imperfection of our best services, it is only that she may be brought to a happy reliance on Jesus Christ, and so have life through his blessed name."

He prayed for his friends in their distress. So he writes Dr. Stonehouse, when in affliction: "A passage which I read this very day, in Colossians, (chap. i. 11,) is extremely pertinent to your case, and what I shall frequently pray may be fulfilled to your great consolation, that you may be strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering, with joyfulness."

He wished strictly to guard against flattery. To a kind and honoured correspondent, he writes: "I assure you it would grieve me beyond expression, if any thing should drop from my pen that might awaken the least vanity in your mind, or injure that most precious virtue, humility: this would be poison instead of balm. The high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, beholds the vain and conceited afar off." To Dr. Stonehouse, whose letter he apprehended flattered him, he says:—"Praise is most enchanting music to the human ear; shall I say most delicious poison to the human

taste? From strangers, or complimentary correspondents, we must expect a touch upon this string, but among friends, among bosom friends, it must not be so; you and I will teach one another's hearts to rise in wonder and glow in love, at the consideration of that ever blessed Sovereign, who is higher than the kings of the earth, and yet lay in darkness in the shadow of death, that he might make us the sons of God and exalt us to eternal life."

HIS PERSONAL RELIGION THROUGH LIFE.

Mr. Hervey, having laid a good foundation in scriptural principles of grace and truth; was eminent for personal holiness in heart and life. His apprehensions of truth were totally in the light of free salvation to the guilty, as the ground of immediate confidence. It was matter of experience to him, that, as the chief of sinners, he had a right to say, Christ was his Saviour, by virtue of the general free promise and grant of the gospel. This he actually did, and in believing, he received strength for duty, and also the acceptance of it. Herein he not only received the truths of the gospel on these points, as truths, but besides, and from the influence of them upon his mind, received Christ himself, as conveyed therein to him in particular. These believing apprehensions were a living principle of holiness, not merely as acts or duties commanded by God, or given as the exercise of a grace, but chiefly as possessing Christ, as looking to and receiving Christ, made of God to him sanctification and redemption. In the name of himself and other evangelical preachers, he says: "Our maxim is, though less than nothing, though

worse than nothing, in ourselves; we can do all things through Christ strengthening us." To follow after holiness he counted the greatest privilege. Speaking of the good actions of Abel, Enoch, Abraham, and Elias, he says: "For my part, I shall reckon myself truly happy; I shall bless the day wherein I was born, if I may but be enabled to follow the footsteps of those illustrious leaders, though I should not reach the summit of their virtues."

Under an impression of regard to Jesus as all in religion, he acted towards his friends. To one of them he relates the following anecdote: "I remember a very ingenious gentleman once showed me a composition in manuscript, which he intended for the press, and asked my opinion: it was moral, it was delicate, it was highly finished; but I ventured to tell him there was one thing wanting, the name and merits of the divinely excellent Jesus, without which I feared the God of heaven would not accompany it with his grace, and without which I was sure the enemy of souls would laugh it to scorn. The gentleman seemed to be struck with surprise. 'The name of Jesus!' he replied: 'this single circumstance would frustrate all my expectations, would infallibly obstruct the sale, and make readers of refinement throw it aside with disdain.'" On this Mr. Hervey makes the following reflection: "I can never think the spread of our performances will be obstructed by pleasing Him who has all hearts and events in his sovereign hand." He further adds (upon his publishing *Theron and Aspasio*), "I am willing to put the matter to a trial, and myself to practise the advice I gave. So far from secreting the amiable and majestic names of JESUS and the adorable TRINITY, I have

printed them in grand and conspicuous capitals; that all the world may see I look upon it as my highest honour to acknowledge, to venerate, to magnify my God and Saviour: and if he has no power over the hearts of men, or nothing to do with the events of the world; if acceptance and success are none of his gifts, have no dependance on his smile; then I am content, perfectly content, to be without them.”*

On the whole, the motto of Mr. Hervey's Christianity was LOOKING UNTO JESUS. This he wished to do in every case. In every enjoyment he looked to Jesus, receiving it as proceeding from his love, and purchased by his agonies. In every tribulation he looked to Jesus; he marked his gracious hand managing the scourge, or mingling the bitter cup, attempering it to a proper severity, adjusting the time of its continuance, and ready to make these seeming adversities productive of real good. In every duty he looked to Jesus, for strength, motive, and acceptance. In every infirmity and failing, he looked unto Jesus, his merciful High Priest, pleading his atoning blood, and making intercession for transgressors. In every temptation he looked to Jesus, as the Captain of salvation, to make him more than a conqueror over all his enemies. And, in the hour of his departure, we know by the sequel he looked unto Jesus, as he who had swallowed up death in victory, and was the only way to the abodes of bliss. These views of Christ as the all in religion, never led him to supineness, security, or licentiousness; but, on the contrary, to active practical holiness. So he says: “If Jesus be the first and the last,

* Letters to Lady F. Shirley, Let. 90.

should he not be so likewise in our esteem, in our desires, in our glorying, in our life and death?"

It is well known it was Mr. Hervey's doctrine, that we must partake of the comforts of the gospel, before we can practise the duties of the law. 'These comforts he mentions in his letters: "A saving interest in Christ, a renewal by the Holy Ghost, a persuasion of our reconciliation to God, and a persuasion of our future enjoyment of the heavenly happiness." Few Christians have had the following Scriptures more exemplified in their experience:—"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee;" and, "being filled with all joy and peace in believing." What Mr. Toplady reports as one of his sayings, may, with great propriety, be applied to himself: "'To a lively believer, who enjoys continual fellowship with God, every day is a Sabbath, and every meal a sacrament.'" His intimate friend, Dr. Stonehouse, says of him: "Hervey was a very cheerful man, though always ill." "I am always, as Mr. Thomson truly speaks, weak and ill, half dead while I live; yet my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, in Jehovah my righteousness." This was the more remarkable in Mr. Hervey, as, through his constitutional malady, insuperable languors seized him, unfitting him for every business, rendering every enjoyment unrelishing, filling him with misgiving thoughts, and making every thing that went cross acutely painful to him.

Besides other consolations, he particularly enjoyed a good hope of eternal glory. "In that happy world," says he, "where the inhabitant shall no more say, I am sick, there I hope, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, to meet you,

and no longer tire you with the disagreeable mention of my indispositions, but join with you in loving, adoring and magnifying, that dear, divinely excellent Jesus, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood.”* Again; “In the heavenly courts of the living God, there I trust to meet you, there to see you walking among the angels of light, or sitting on a throne of glory, or prostrate at those feet which were pierced with irons, and nailed to the accursed tree, for your salvation. This, perhaps, when we see clearly the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths, of our adored Redeemer’s love, will be esteemed the most desirable posture, and the most delightful employ. ‘Till I am admitted to this honour, I am,” &c.† To the same purpose he writes to an intimate friend, who had asked him, Have you peace and joy in the Holy Ghost? “I sometimes do rejoice, and not in carnal satisfactions, but in hope of the glory which shall be revealed; sometimes, too, I am blessed with inward peace, and possess my soul in tranquillity.”‡

While Mr. Hervey relished the divine pleasures of Christianity, he utterly detested those which the thoughtless and gay find in romances, novels, and theatrical entertainments. “These,” says he, “are commonly calculated to inflame a wanton fancy; and if conducted with so much modesty as not to debauch the affections, they pervert the judgment and bewilder the taste. By their incredible adventures, their extravagant parade of gallantry, and their characters widely different from truth and nature, they inspire foolish conceits, beget idle expectations, introduce a disgust of genuine his-

* Letters to Lady F. Shirley, Let. 26.

† Ibid 62.

‡ Letter to Mr. Whitefield.

tory, and indispose their admirers to acquiesce in the decent civilities, or to relish the satisfactions of common life." As to the theatre, he says, "If an earthquake should happen, ask Mr. ——— (that advocate for the theatre) if he would like to be found in the play-house, and go from the boxes or the pit to the great tribunal. Indeed, the stage is indefensible."

Mr. Hervey considered the atonement of Jesus as the great foundation of holiness. Had he in the least apprehended that the imputed righteousness of Jesus had any tendency to subvert holiness, to confirm the hypocritical professor in his neglect of moral duties, or discourage the sincere convert from the pursuit of real virtue, he would have rejected it with the utmost abhorrence; but he, on scriptural grounds, viewed the atonement as a great cause of universal holiness; that this being applied to the soul, delivers fully from the curse of the law and the strength of sin; that hereby all the divine attributes are legally engaged to bestow sanctification, as the quintessence of eternal life, to which we are adjudged in justification; that this blood of Jesus, in a real, though inconceivable manner, purges our conscience from dead works, to serve the living God; and that, in this atonement, there is contained all strength and motive to excite and enable us to holiness in all manner of conversation. In his sermon on Galatians vi. 14, he has these words: "True morality is the image of the blessed God, and its proper origin is from the cross of our divine Master. Through the merits of his death, sinners are made partakers of the Holy Spirit, who writes upon their hearts, and makes legible in their conversation, what was anciently written upon the mitre of the high-priest,

Holiness to the Lord! And O what a motive is the cross of Christ to the exercise of every virtue! He died! my Lord! my Judge! my King! to redeem me from all iniquity, and to make me zealous of good works. How powerfully, far beyond any naked instruction of abstract reasonings, do such considerations invite us, urge us, constrain us, to renounce all ungodliness, and adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things!" "The cross of Christ affords matter for the deepest humility, and yields fuel for the most flaming love. Faith in our crucified Jesus is an ever active principle of the most cheerful and exact obedience. From the atonement springs assurance of pardon, a comfortable persuasion of our reconciliation with God, an established hope of eternal glory. These will be operative as a torch in the sheaf; these will enkindle love, and increase watchfulness; these will beget true humility of mind, and work an unfeigned abhorrence of sin; these will enlarge the heart with charity, and exalt the affections above the world."

His constant declaration was, that in his experience he found the all-sufficiency of Christ's righteousness, and confidence therein, to be a never-failing spring of true holiness. As to any licentious inference, which men may draw from the doctrine of the atonement, he thought they could be drawn by none but those who give evidence they do not understand it, and cannot be said to believe it. So he says in a letter: "If they do not understand the fitness of free justification to promote holiness, it is because their understandings are darkened, it is a sign they want the eye-salve." From his own experience, he says, "I believe that Jesus Christ, the incarnate God, is my Saviour;

that he has done all I was bound to perform, and suffered all I was condemned to sustain, and so he procured a full final salvation for a poor damnable sinner; I now would fain serve him who hath saved me; I would glorify him before men, who justified me before God; I would study to please him in righteousness and holiness, all the days of my life.”*—“In my adorable Redeemer I have a perfect righteousness, and am completely justified; and shall I not endeavour to walk worthy of such favours, to show my gratitude for such beneficence, by bringing forth the fruits of righteousness in all my conversation?”—“In the incarnate Jehovah alone, in his divinely excellent deeds, and unutterably meritorious sufferings, I have righteousness; from the joyful knowledge, the personal appropriation, and the perpetual improvement of this inestimable privilege, I have strength for my sanctification. Now do I indeed delight myself in the Lord, who, perfectly reconciled and infinitely gracious, has done so great things for me. Now do I cordially love my neighbour; and being so happy myself, unfeignedly long for his eternal happiness, that he may be a partaker with me of this great salvation.” He also on this point appeals to the experience of all who have tasted that the Lord is gracious: “Speak, ye who are enabled to believe that God is reconciled, has received the all-satisfying atonement, and placed his Son’s righteousness to your account! Have not you, under such convictions, felt every power of your souls springing forward to glorify your heavenly Father? to glorify him by every instance of obedience, fidelity, and zeal?

As many religious letters were sent to Mr. Her-

* Letter to Mr. Whitefield.

vey, which, through his peculiar bodily weakness, he was not able to answer, he made it an invariable rule to remember these correspondents in his prayers. We have many instances of this devotional spirit: "My constant prayer is, that Immanuel would vouchsafe to prosper the words of my lips, and the dictates of my pen." For his friends he prayed: "I think I may venture to say, without vanity and without falsehood, I am grateful; heartily wishing and praying that our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, may give you everlasting salvation, and good hope through grace."*—"Till this heart ceases to beat, I shall never cease to pray for your happiness."—"I may truly say, I never recollect your name, without imploring for you all the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ." To Mr. and Mrs. Orchard he writes: "Do you desire my prayers? I wish they were more effectual and prevailing; such as they are you both have them, and shall have them to my life's end." In a letter to Dr. Watts, he says: "Our excellent friend, Dr. Doddridge, informs me of the infirm condition of your health, for which reason I humbly beseech the Father of spirits, and the God of our life, to renew your strength as the eagle, and to recruit a lamp that hath shone with distinguished lustre in his sanctuary; or if this may not consist with the counsels of his wisdom, to make all your bed in your languishings, softly to untie the cords of animal existence, and enable your dislodging soul to pass triumphantly through the valley of death, leaning on your beloved Jesus, and rejoicing in the greatness of his salvation."

* Letters to Lady F. Shirley, Let. 61.

As to his people, he always remembered to labour for them in the closet as well as in the pulpit; to wrestle for them in secret supplication, as well as to exert himself in public preaching, for their spiritual and eternal benefit: while he reckoned this a pleasing employ, he also says, he thought it the truest method of expressing his pastoral affection. When he finished any public service, he always retired to his closet, supplicating the Lord's blessing on what he had said. Exhorting his people to pray for faith in the righteousness of Jesus, he says: "Seek this blessing to yourselves, brethren; and if I forget to join my best supplications to yours, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth. My heart's desire and prayer for you shall always be, that you may believe to the saving of the soul."

His importunity is illustrated in the following well authenticated anecdote:—Mr. Hervey's manservant, sleeping in the room immediately above that of his master, one night, long after the family was retired to rest, awoke; hearing the groans of Mr. Hervey in the room beneath, who seemed to be in great distress, he went down immediately and opened the door of his master's room; but instead of finding him in his bed, as he expected, he saw him prostrate on the floor, engaged in earnest importunate prayer to his God; like Jacob, he wept and made supplication. Disturbed with this unseasonable appearance, Mr. Hervey, with his usual mildness, only said, "John, you should not have entered the room, unless I had rung the bell."

As he had occasion, secret ejaculations were always his exercise. In his own name, as well as in that of a society at Bideford, he says; "Besides secret solemn prayers, we should accustom ourselves to short, but devout and fervent ejaculations

all the day long, that we may fulfil the divine command of praying always, praying without ceasing, watching unto prayer; in this manner deriving continually fresh supplies of wisdom, strength, and righteousness, from the all-sufficient and inexhaustible, though overflowing source: and blessed, for ever blessed be God, this may be done in the midst of business, without hindering it; in the midst of a journey, without retarding it; and in the midst of company, without alarming it."

Either in ejaculations or on his knees he prayed in the following cases:—When he received a religious book; when he gave away religious books or tracts; and when he wrote letters of advice, reproof, or consolation: indeed, the grace of God imbued him with a happy devotional spirit, which appears on every suitable occasion. We may observe it frequently in his letters: speaking of eternal life, he immediately adds: "And in thee, blessed Jesus, in thee alone, this is to be found."—"Long eternity receives us, and then we rest from our labours, then we forget our transient toil, amidst innumerable ages of perfection, and glory, and joy: for all this, not unto us, not unto us, but to thy name, unto thy love, thy righteousness, thy intercession, be the praise."

In family devotion, Mr. Hervey was strict and constant. Before supper, the evening prayer ascended; this, rather than a later hour, was pitched upon, that the family might join in the sacred service with a lively devotion. No servant was allowed to be absent. A chapter of the sacred oracles was read; Mr. Hervey made the choice. He selected some of the most instructive and animating portions of Scripture, and judged it advisable to peruse these again and again, rather than to go

through the whole of the sacred writings. He ordered the servants to take it by turns to read; and, in this way, they read through the Psalms, Gospels, and Epistles, so much every day. When the chapter was finished, he singled out one verse of weighty and edifying import, which, for the space of a few minutes, he explained, applied, and affectionately urged on their consciences. When a friend was present, to whom he thought his discourse might be useful, or when he met with a passage on the love of Christ, he would enlarge for a considerable time, and then he concluded with prayer. 'This he performed with great seriousness and reverence, though he was never tedious. Every part was pronounced with that deliberation and solemn accent which commands attention and creates awe.

In the morning, before breakfast, the worship of God was renewed. At this time he omitted the chapter, but would ask one of the servants, "Well, where was our text last night?" After he had repeated it, he made them give an account of what had been said upon it; he threw the substance of the explanation into a few searching and interesting questions, which he addressed to each of them; he encouraged those whose answers showed that they had given diligent heed to his instructions; and, when needful, he put on an air of severity, mixed with tenderness, and reproved the negligent. He re-inculcated the principal points, charging them to retain the doctrines in their memories, and revolve them in their thoughts, while they were pursuing their respective employments through the day. He then concluded with prayer, under the influence of the same devotional temper.

He caused all his family to attend public wor-

ship. So he writes to a friend: "Thanks for the venison; we cannot dress it to-day; all my family are to be at court this morning; the King of heaven has sent positive orders, and will not excuse either man-servant or maid-servant."

Under a sense of human depravity, Mr. Hervey, though one of the best of men, lamented before God his ignorance of the divine perfections, his slowness of heart to believe the divine promises, his languor of gratitude for the inestimable and innumerable gifts of the Divine goodness. He frequently felt deadness in his devotions, disorder in his affections, and other relics of the original leaven. Under these he groaned, and sought daily by faith, prayer, and watchfulness, more and more to put off this old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts: and to alleviate his sorrow, he endeavoured continually to remember, that however unworthy he now was, however vile he had been, his adored Redeemer's righteousness was perfectly infinite, and in it he was fully warranted to make his boast, and that his old man was crucified with Jesus. The suitable reflection of Mr. Hervey in this case, is expressed in the following words:—"We believe a friend, when he makes a profession of kindness; and why are we so backward to believe the repeated, more solemn, and infinitely more faithful assurances, which the Scriptures give us of our Redeemer's love? Let us blush and be confounded for our unbelief, and may the Lord of all power and grace help our unbelief."—"Unbelief treats God as a liar; because it rejects the testimony he has borne concerning his dear Son. Unbelief makes us idolize our own performances, sacrilegiously rob the Redeemer of his honour, and most arrogantly ascribe them to self."

“I can; I assure you, act an implicit faith on you, and believe you have excellent reasons for your conduct, though they should be hid from my knowledge; but such is my weakness, (O that I may blush, and be confounded under a sense of it!) I can hardly do the same with regard to the unerring and ever-gracious God. ‘Lord, increase our faith,’ is a supplication which we should often address to the throne of grace.”

“Concerning the Scriptures,” he says, “I would rejoice to hold conferences in private houses, in the pulpit, in my family, and when abroad; nay, I would be wholly employed about them, unless the inbred corruption of my heart opposed.” He exclaims, “O blessed book! our better, our spiritual sun, that sheddest thy bright beams upon our souls, and furnishest us with the light of life! thou sovereign antidote against the delusions of the devil, the treachery of our fallen nature, and the darkness of the world! thou guide, to lead us safely through the waves of this miserable life unto our heavenly and everlasting rest! No wonder that David counted his kingdom as nothing, and called thee his heritage and portion for ever; no wonder the holy martyrs parted with their estates, their families, their blood, rather than with thee. ’Tis rather to be wondered at, that mankind do not prize thee as their richest jewel, converse with thee as their sweetest companion, and talk of thee as the dearest object of their love, all the day long. ’Tis with regret I leave off speaking of thy unspeakable worth.”—“I have often thought that the Scripture is finely calculated to furnish out the most exquisite entertainment to the imagination, from those principal sources mentioned by Addison, the great, the beautiful, and the new. But

what is this compared with that infinitely noble benefit, to impart which is the professed design of the Bible, the benefit of making us wise unto salvation, of making us partakers of a divine nature."

In his last days he prayed much over his Bible; through life he did the same. Reading the word and prayer he found to be duties which naturally assisted one another; the one furnishing him with confessions, pleas, and arguments; the other promoting solemnity and spirituality of mind, which he found went further toward his understanding the Scriptures than a library of expositions. He mentions some Scriptures he prayed over: "I will heal your backslidings, and love you freely." "There shall be a fountain opened for the house of David," &c. &c.

Mr. Hervey possessed and cultivated spiritual-mindedness in a remarkable degree. He knew it became him as a Christian divine; and in the exercise of it he took great delight. This is evident in his Meditations. In the infancy of his Christianity and evangelical knowledge, he manifests the spiritual turn of his mind. In the following letter he recapitulates his meditations in a journey during the early part of his ministry:—"On Sunday I was called out by Providence from my own flock, to preach at two strange churches. They lay at a considerable distance from each other, and from Dummer, so that in passing to them, and repairing again to my own parish, I travelled a good many miles. All the way I went along, I was entertained in the finest manner imaginable. I was in company with a gentleman of a clear understanding and a tolerable share of reading. He could talk judiciously upon most topics, and would sometimes bestow some hints upon religious ones: so

that when I was disposed for conversation, I could have immediate recourse to one that would refine my taste, and improve my judgment, if not minister grace to my heart. At our first setting out, we went over strong ground, where no seed was sown, and so no fruit could grow. Its uselessness was not owing to any defect in point of fertility, but to a want of being manured. Is not this the case of many immortal souls, who bid fair for becoming saints, but are lost and spoiled for want of care and instruction? O for faithful shepherds to seek them, for industrious husbandmen to cultivate them! Send, Lord, plenty of such to work in thy vineyard, and to watch over thy sheep! This coarse beginning, though it had no form or comeliness in itself, yet tended to give an additional verdure to the succeeding scenes; so the bottomless pit, and the unquenchable fire, though infinitely formidable, will create in the elect a tasteful relish and enjoyment of their heavenly felicity. We made more haste than ordinary to get away from this barren spot. For why should one frequent such acquaintance, where all that occurs is vain and unprofitable? where nothing truly beneficial can either be imparted or acquired? When we were advanced a little further, we entered upon a large inclosure; here were all the footsteps of a commendable and successful industry. The wheat was in the blade, and sprang up with a plenteous increase, and in goodly array. This suggested to me the value of a diligent hand: by a spirit of management, even the wilderness may be brought to bud and blossom as a rose: and were there such a spirit among the professors of religion, it would prompt them to be, like Dorcas, full of good works; or like the great apostle, continually aspiring after

fresh and higher measures of perfection. We should be frugal of our time, careful of all our talents, and laudably covetous of every grain of improvement in piety. We held on our course, admiring still as we went, the teeming earth, the infant corn, and the pregnant promises of a prodigious harvest. This led me to muse upon one of the distinguishing doctrines of Christianity, I mean the general resurrection. It convinced me how perfectly possible it was with God to raise the dead; it gave me also a glimpse of that perfection of beauty to which the bodies of the saints shall rise; for a little while ago I beheld, and, lo! the whole vegetable world was naked and bare, without any ornament; but now how charming it appears! no virgin is more gay and blooming, no bride is better arrayed, or more sparkling; and if God so enlivens and clothes the grass of the earth, and the tenants of the field, how much more shall he quicken and ennoble our mortal bodies, which we hope are the temples of the Holy Ghost! Our next remove was to a lane, set on either side with lofty trees and humble shrubs. Here the twigs were gemmed with buds, just ready to open and unfold; there they were already opened into blossoms. O the adorable efficacy of the divine voice! how powerfully and lastingly it operates! God said once, 'Let the earth bring forth;' he spake not twice, and yet how punctually does nature obey this single command! O that men would lay this to heart, and learn a lesson of obedience from the inanimate creation! All other things continue according to their Maker's ordinance, and shall man be the only rebel in the kingdom of nature? While our sight was regaled in this manner, a set of chiming bells saluted our ears, with a solemn and

serene harmony. It had no great diversity of stops, nor artful mixture of notes, but surely it was most gladdening music, and spoke a heavenly meaning. It was calculated to inspire such a joy as the royal Psalmist felt, when he heard the acceptable invitation to go up to the house of the Lord. On a sudden, when we were least apprehensive of it, the wind wheeled about, and bore away the silver sounds, but it was only to bring them back again, as unexpectedly, with the fresh pleasure of a grateful surprise. Here I thought of the sweet influences of grace, and wished for that happy time, when the visits of the blessed Spirit will be uninterrupted."

The following are instances of his spiritual turn, from his letters:—"There is at Bideford, and has been for a considerable time, a townsman of mine; his name is ———. I little thought to find such a person in these remote parts: it puts me in mind of heaven, where people of every kindred and tongue, of all nations and languages, will form one general and glorious assembly."—"I have been prevailed on to sit for my picture: if ever portrait was the shadow of a shadow, mine is. O that I may be renewed after the amiable image of the blessed Jesus! and when I awake up after his likeness, I shall be satisfied with it." A gentleman being with him in his garden, he plucked a rose, and desired him to present it to his wife, to put her in mind of the Rose of Sharon. She paid that regard to the giver and the gift, as to put it into a frame with a glass. Upon hearing of this, he writes: "Your lady has shown the most welcome complaisance to me and to the rose; to me, in accepting what is less than a trifle; to the rose, in putting it to such a use: and could that poor

vegetable be sensible, it would rejoice to be a remembrancer of its amiable Creator. The prophet calls upon the whole creation, inanimate as it is, to exult and triumph in the grace of our incarnate God: Sing, O heavens! be joyful, O earth! break forth into singing, ye mountains! O forest, and every tree, whether cultivated or wild! for the Lord, by his incarnation, blood and righteousness, hath redeemed Jacob and glorified himself, most magnificently displayed all his divine perfections, in the salvation of Israel. I heartily wish she may every day become more and more acquainted with the Rose of Sharon, that his loveliness, riches and glory may be revealed in her heart by the Holy Ghost. Happy the souls in which this flower of heaven blossoms, which are charmed with its beauty and refreshed with its odours; their happiness will not fade away as a leaf, but, like the merit and mercy of their Lord, will be new every morning, new every moment, new through eternal ages."

'The following are other extracts: "The small-pox is marking many here, and carrying off some among us. I have often thought it is a lively emblem of the condition of our souls, by corrupt nature and evil practice; so polluted, so loathsome, is our better part, in the eye of uncreated purity, till we are cleansed in redeeming blood. May we earnestly long to be washed in that fountain opened in our Saviour's side, for sin and uncleanness."—"I am much pleased with the appearance of a wintry guest, a fall of snow, because it gives me a fine idea of that spotless purity which I trust my friend will derive from the precious blood of Christ. How endearing are his words, and how inestimable his promise! 'Come now, let us reason together,

saith the Lord; though your iniquities be as scarlet, they shall be as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool!" How noble is the declaration, and how triumphant is the faith of David, speaking upon the same subject! 'Thou shalt purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.' These passages must certainly refer to the blood of the everlasting covenant, without which there is no remission; they cannot but relate to the blood of the Lamb, which taketh away the sin of the world. How great must he be, how infinitely glorious, who can take away all sins! so entirely take them away, that not the least spot or blemish shall remain."

"Will you give me leave to transmit in writing what I heard in conversation, an event that lately happened, and told by a person who was an eye-witness to the whole? A soldier was condemned to be executed for desertion, a young man, in the prime of life, with the bloom of health in his countenance. Being come to the place of execution, he prepared himself for death without any emotion of fear, opened his breast without any change of countenance, and drew the cap over his eyes without the least trepidation in his limbs. Six of his comrades were draughted out, and ordered to advance softly forwards. Being come within four yards of the criminal, they received orders to fire, and shot each his ball quite through the body. After this, the corpse, with its face uncovered, and the wounds bleeding, was extended on the ground, and the whole regiment, to make the terror more impressive, marched over its legs. The sight was so awful, that one of the soldiers fainted away as he passed by the dismal spectacle; and the account so

affecting, that I observed the tears stealing down the cheeks of a lady, when it was related. Will not this help us to form some faint apprehensions of God Almighty's tender and amazing love in Christ Jesus? When we had deserted his service, and rebelled against his majesty, not once or twice only, but times out of number, did he pass sentence upon us? No, he exercised all long-suffering toward us; instead of condemning us, he deputed his own Son to be condemned, and to suffer in our room. He resigned the dearly-beloved of his soul, the immaculate and blessed Jesus, to receive all the arrows of vengeance into his heart; to become a pale, bloody, mangled corpse, a spectacle of misery to angels and men, on purpose that we might go free, that we might be delivered from punishment, and become heirs of eternal happiness. O adorable kindness to none-such rebels, freely to pardon and fully to forgive them! Still more stupendous, to raise them from the block to the highest preferment in heaven; to exalt them from the stake to a glorious crown, or everlasting kingdom; and to surrender his illustrious and divine Son in their place, this is loving kindness unutterable and inconceivable."

A gentleman waiting in his parlour, to transact some business as to ploughing his parsonage-grounds, while he was writing a letter to a minister, he added: "May prosperity attend his plough; but, above all, may it attend yours and mine, which would open the ground for the seed of the everlasting gospel."

Several pious ministers, of different denominations, having for two days successively dined with him, he exclaims, "O for that hour when we shall all sit down at the marriage-feast of the Lamb!

May we taste it by faith, till our souls are satiated with its fulness in glory."

Recollecting a most delicate piece of flattery, addressed to a Roman emperor by Horace the poet, he says; "This I would cast into a Christian mould, and thus translate:

"When faith presents the Saviour's death,
And whispers, This is mine,
Sweetly my rising hours advance;
And peacefully decline.

"While such my views, the radiant sun
Sheds a most sprightly ray;
Each object smiles, all nature charms,—
I sing my cares away."

Mr. Hervey, in his younger years, was vain and proud to a singular degree; but the grace of God made him low in his own eyes. Learning of Him who is meek and lowly, "he walked softly all his years." His friend Ryland says of him, in this respect, "He practised a kind of forgetfulness of himself, in order to be agreeable to others. He gave himself no air of superiority on account of his being a minister of the Established Church. He was always on a level with his company. He never considered himself as James Hervey the celebrated writer, but as a poor guilty sinner, equally indebted to Divine grace, with the lowest day-labourer in his parish." "If Mr. Hervey may be believed," says one of his intimate friends, "nothing was more offensive to him, than those encomiums on his piety, which only serve to render his confession of himself hypocritical, and his doctrine false. In all his thoughts, in all his practice, he found himself a sinner, and in nothing more so than in entertaining any good conceit of

himself, or his own state, by comparison with other men. God had taught him he had no rule to measure by, but the perfect law or will of Heaven, and every single deviation served to render his plea of righteousness vain, to class him among the rest of mankind-sinners, and subject him to eternal vengeance. In the view of these circumstances, mercy revealed in Christ Jesus to the guilty was a precious, joyful sound, which he heard and lived by. Had he heard any one describe the holy, heavenly, pious Mr. Hervey, he would have replied, 'You have described a man that will never enter heaven, but as the guilty James Hervey.'"

In a letter, he says, "I am ashamed of my unprofitableness; I certainly have been a most unfaithful servant. The traces of my ministerial conduct are like the path-way of a keel in the waves; oblivion is the only honour, forgiveness all the reward, I crave for my service. O may the blood of the heavenly Lamb be my atonement, or I sink into aggravated condemnation! May his most perfect obedience be my righteousness, or I must be covered with utter confusion! and now my Lord is taking away my stewardship, which I have so wretchedly misimproved."—"O that in every thing I may have the teachableness of a babe! I have the weakness, Lord endow me with the docility, of a weaned child, yea, of a babe and suckling,"—"O that I may evermore grow in a self-denying, self-abhorring temper! then how gladly shall I submit to the righteousness of God."—"I am sure my poor, lame, mangled conformity to my maker's commands, fills me with shame, and would make me hang down my head as a bulrush; but my Lord's death, my Lord's obedience, my divine Lord's

merit, encourages me, emboldens me, and enables me to say, "Who shall condemn me?"

To his friend, Mr. Moses Brown, he writes: "I was much pleased with Mr. ——'s observations on my two little volumes (the *Meditations*.) Let the righteous smite me friendly, and reprove me; with thankfulness I shall receive, with readiness submit to correction. I am very far from thinking Mr. —— a sour critic; on the contrary, I admire his candour, in transmitting the mistakes to the author himself, and not trumpeting them abroad to the discredit of the work. I have so high an opinion of his judgment, that if the Father of lights should enable me to finish the small piece I am attempting, I shall be extremely glad to have every sheet pass under the correction of so wise and penetrating an observer." The following anecdote is related on this subject:—Mr. Hervey, being in company with a person who was paying him some compliments on account of his writings, replied, laying his hand on his breast, "O Sir! you would not strike the sparks of applause, if you knew how much corrupt tinder I have within."

Even under his trials he was thankful. He says, "O that I may be enabled to bless the hand, and kiss the rod that smites me! I thank the physician who prescribes my medicines, though disgustful and expensive. I thank the surgeon who has pierced my veins, and taken away even part of my vital blood, because I am assured he intends my welfare. And is there not infinitely greater reason to thank the unerring and tender providence of my God, who never afflicts arbitrarily, but graciously, nor grieves the children of men, but for their spiritual and eternal good?"

To Dr. Watts he writes: "Pardon me if I take

leave to interrupt your important studies for the good of mankind, or suspend for one moment your communion with the blessed God. I cannot excuse myself, without expressing my gratitude for the present, by your order, lately transmitted by your bookseller, (the Doctor's discourses on the glory of Christ as God-man,) which I shall value, not only for its instructive contents, but in a very peculiar manner for the sake of the author and giver."

While Mr. Hervey possessed the feelings of human nature, his temper was by grace subdued into the meekness and gentleness of Christ. Though naturally irascible, having put on Christ, he put on a meek and quiet spirit. He had some very sharp trials of his patience both from God and man, but he learned meekness by the things which he suffered.

He made it a constant rule to pray for all who affronted or injured him. A nobleman having affronted one of his correspondents and himself, he seems to have felt indignant on the occasion, and to have uttered passionate expressions; but he immediately recovered himself, and added, "Come, let us take a generous revenge; let us beseech the King of kings, and Lord of lords, to bless with the knowledge of Christ, with all the riches of his gospel, him who had not benevolence enough to grant us so small a boon."

A friend having sent him a caution against being drawn into controversy with a warm and overbearing disputant, he writes: "Controversy is as much my aversion as it can be your's, for where this begins, religion too often ends. I shall not enter the lists, I promise you, with any one, unless I am absolutely necessitated to it; but if I am com-

pelled to appear in print on such an occasion, I shall endeavour to pay due regard to Solomon's excellent advice. 'A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger,' Prov. xv. 1. Instead of exasperating my adversary by cutting reprehensions, I will, if possible, constrain him, by a candid and respectful treatment, to moderate his temper, and, by coercive propriety of arguments, persuade him to relinquish such tenets as I think erroneous. God grant I may never behave with indecent resentment, how great soever may be the provocation of my gainsayers; but that in all my writings and conversation, I may avoid the hasty spirit, lest I injure my own peace of mind, and disgrace my profession as a Christian and a minister. It is a rule with me, always to speak well of the good qualities of even bad men, especially when others are censuring them with an unmerciful severity: and I could wish every controversialist would learn so much candour, as to put the best construction on his opponent's book, and to embrace what was in general good in it, however he might censure some particular opinion of the contending author. 'To live peaceably with all men, is my earnest desire and daily prayer; and, in order to do this, I am more and more convinced of the necessity of candour, humility, and a conscientious regard to the pattern of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.'—"I have often wondered that disputants, especially on religious subjects, should choose to deal in such acrimonious and reproachful language. Does the wrath of man work the righteousness of God? or is a passionate invective the proper means, either to conciliate our affections, or convince our judgment? Why should we not write in the same gentle and obliging strain

in which we converse? Why should not our controversies from the press be carried on with such a candid and amiable strife? This would certainly render them more pleasing to the reader, more profitable to the public, and much more likely to have the desired effect on our opponent."

When he was misrepresented and calumniated, he would say: "Our enemies are sometimes our best friends, and tell us truths, and then we should amend our faults, and be thankful for such information; and if what they say is not true, and only spoken through malice, then such persons are to be considered as diseased in their minds, and we should pray for them; they are to be pitied, and I might as justly be angry with the man who is diseased in his body.

We have the following, among other instances of his meekness:—"One of his tenants, in whose field he was gently riding, because it was clean and by the side of the road, threatened to shoot him; to whom he said, "Pray, Mr. Nichols, don't be so angry, and I will do you no harm; the first gap I come to, that I can lead my horse over, I'll do it, and creep through the hedge myself."

His meekness was produced and animated by evangelical views. To a friend, he said: "Was there any real offence, it is not for a follower or a minister of Christ to resent it. Our blessed Redeemer was meek under the most provoking indignities, meek under the vilest calumnies and incessant contradiction of sinners, and made the kindest excuse for his disciples, though they neglected him in his bitter agony; meek he was, though mocked by Herod, and insulted by his scornful soldiers; meek, though they buffeted his sacred head, and spared not to spit in his amiable face:

when condemned to death, he was led as a lamb to the slaughter; though nailed to the cross, though rent with wounds and racked with pain, he never complained of the barbarous usage; though they hung him on an infamous tree, amidst the most scandalous malefactors, and exposed him to the abhorrence of thousands of spectators, he possessed his soul in patience and resignation; though they reviled him in the extremity of his sorrows, and made wanton sport even with his dying pangs, yet he bore all, he forgave all, yea, he prayed for his inhuman murderers: 'Father, forgive them,' was his merciful supplication; 'for they know not what they do'—his gracious apology! Who can meditate on this miracle of forgiving goodness, and foment indignation, or harbour resentment? May those wonderful words ever be sounding in our ears, and that lovely pattern ever shining before our eyes! May that most compassionate voice of our dear Lord have the same effect upon our ruffled spirits, as his commanding voice had upon the tempestuous sea. It is written in the prophet, 'The wolf shall dwell with the lamb;' the nations of the world shall learn war no more, angry passions shall be soothed into gentleness and love. Surely, whenever this desirable change takes place, the example of our blessed Master, set home by the Divine Spirit, will be the instrument of producing the happy revolution."

To his relations this good man showed all dutiful attention, particularly as to their best and eternal interests. To one of his brothers he wrote a long and excellent letter, on his conduct during his apprenticeship. He was particularly anxious he should be connected with a religious master, and

therefore said : “ Desire your honoured mother and mine to have a great regard to your soul, and the things that make for its welfare, in putting you out. Let it be inquired, not only whether such a tradesman be a man of substance and credit, but whether he be also a man of religion and godliness? whether he be a lover of good people? a careful frequenter of the church? whether his children be well nurtured and educated in the fear of the Lord? whether family prayer be daily offered up in his house? whether he believes that the souls of his servants are committed to his trust, and that he will be answerable for the neglect of them at the judgment-seat? It will be sadly hazardous to venture yourself under the roof of any person who is not furnished with these principles, or is a stranger to these practices.”

“ April 1741.” Mr. Hervey writes: “ My poor father lies languishing in a most deplorable and distressed condition. His case is uncommon: his pains are racking and extremely acute. Physicians have done their utmost, and can contribute no relief. Art stands baffled, medicines confess their impotence, and the disorder, sharp and inveterate, triumphs over all human applications. This may ere long be our case. O that we may be so wise as to make preparation for the worst! If we remember our Creator in the days of our health, he will not forget us when trouble and anguish take hold of us. Forget us! No, but will make all our bed in our sickness; will soften our agonizing pillow; will wipe off the dying sweat; will speak peace to our soul, when horrible dread overwhelms it; and will provide us an eternal building, when this earthly tabernacle totters, and sinks, and tumbles into dust. That the God of all consolation

may do all this for my poor father now, and for you in the time of need, is the earnest prayer of
J. H."

'To his mother he writes: "You need not doubt of being remembered in my supplications to the throne of grace. O that they were better! O that they proceeded from firmer faith, and were accompanied with greater fervour! Poor and weak as they are, they are often put up in behalf of my honoured parents, that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus may strengthen them with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; may give them a humble resignation to his blessed will, enable them to rejoice even in their tribulations, and make all things to work together for their good, their exceeding great and everlasting good."—"I am glad to hear my sister holds well. God always mingles our cup of affliction with some sweetening drops; none but Christ, that dear and adorable Redeemer, none but Christ, had gall without any honey, and vengeance without any mercy. Blessed be his holy name, for enduring all kinds of misery, that we might want no manner of thing that is good,"—"I hope this will find my father better. I heartily wish, and daily pray, that the God of everlasting compassions may comfort him under his sorrows may sanctify his afflictions, and restore him to his health, that he may recover more spiritual strength before he goes hence, and is no more seen. I sent my brother some books, and humbly beseech the Giver of every good gift to accompany them with his heavenly blessing, for what He blesses will be blessed indeed."

Mr. Hervey was particularly happy in observing the serious turn of mind evinced by his sister, who

lived with him. On this he writes to an intimate friend; "My sister has of late grown considerably in grace. She delights in the word of God, loves the people of God, and is never better pleased than when she is talking of God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent." Of his brother in London, he says to the same friend, "I am glad my brother has so good a taste, and knows what is the best feast; may he evermore delight in such entertainment, where Christ and his glories, Christ and his merits, Christ and his grace, are the subject of the discourse, and chief of the treat."* As to his servants, his commands to them were easy. He scarcely ever saw them, without conversing with them about Christ: their spiritual interests lay near his heart. One of the last he had, who was alive in 1812, observes, "I never saw him, without receiving some kind advice. He gave me my Bible, and recommended me to read it: he also exhorted me to pray."

While in this valley of tears, Mr. Hervey met with reproach, disappointments, and various trials and temptations.

Among his other trials, the carelessness of some of his near relations about the one thing needful, gave him much uneasiness. They did not at all relish the doctrines he so cordially believed and diligently taught. They were indifferent, if not hostile, to his fervent piety; it was with reluctance they attended his family devotions, and even occasionally turned them into ridicule. He had, however, the happiness to see a work of grace begun in several of them before he died.

* This worthy gentleman lived several years after Mr. Hervey, and sustained a most respectable character among the friends of religion.

The weight of his ministerial work lay heavy on him, he being afraid lest he should be unfaithful. Under great distress of conscience, and harassed by violent temptations, he made his case known to an experienced friend, who said, "You do not pray." Surprised at this, he replied, "I pray, if such a thing be possible, too much; I can hardly tell how many times in the day. I bow my knee before God, almost to the omission of my other duties, and the neglect of my necessary studies." "You mistake my meaning," said his friend, "I do not refer you to the ceremony of the knee, but to the devotion of the heart, which neglects not any business, but intermingles prayer with all; which in every place looks to the Lord, and on every occasion lifts up an indigent longing soul for the supply of his grace. This," added he, and spoke with great vehemence, "this is the prayer which all the devils in hell cannot withstand." Mr. Hervey profited by this advice. To an intimate correspondent he writes: "Methinks I could almost wish, that whatever buffetings of Satan I feel, you might be exposed to none of his fiery darts." He then expresses the advantages he reaped from them: "But it cannot, it must not be so; without them, diligence would fold her arms, circumspection would close her eyes, and all our Christian graces lose their activity and vigour. To be immured always in a warm room, where no single breath of air could reach us, would not be conducive to the health of our bodies; to be free from trials, and exempt from temptations, would be as little beneficial to the state of the soul. At such seasons, and by such discipline, we are taught to know ourselves. Where, at such an hour of infirmity and prevailing corruption, where is our

fancied righteousness? what figure does our own obedience make? Alas! it appears most worthless, and most despicably mean. 'Then, how comfortable to reflect, that miserably defective in ourselves, we are complete in our divine Redeemer! When we see our own righteousness to be poor interrupted scraps of duty; to be, as the prophet speaks, no better than filthy rags; then how precious is Jesus Christ, in the character of the Lord our Righteousness! then how reviving is such a text of Scripture, 'God hath made him to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him!' "

He used to remember the saying of an aged Christian: "Those temptations, which drive us to prayer, and make us more attentive to the Scriptures, cannot ruin us, will never hurt us, nay, will turn in the issue to our great advantage."—"A holy joy in the merits of our ever-blessed Redeemer, a calm resignation to the all-wise will of God, and a well-grounded hope of unutterable and immortal bliss in a better world—these, these are more absolutely needful for a case like this (his friend being in affliction,) and will do more toward relief, than all the drugs which nature can produce; and very sure I am, these noble anodynes are dispensed no where but in the Scriptures, are to be procured no otherwise than by prayer: other methods may stupify, but will not remove the pain, much less introduce permanent ease. I speak not this from mere speculation, or conjectural probability; I have myself experienced the efficacy of these expedients, for these desirable purposes; having been a sort of veteran in affliction, I have been under the necessity of applying these consolations, and have the utmost reason to bear witness that there is nothing like them."

To his good friend, the Rev. Moses Brown, he, under his weakness, writes: "If I have not been punctual in answering your letter, ascribe it to the usual, which is indeed the true cause; I mean a failure of strength and languor of spirits, which both disincline and disqualify me for every thing. The winter has made me a prisoner: I have not been any farther than the church these two months.

May you, and all the ministers of the blessed Jesus, be anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power. May you, in imitation of our divine Master, go about doing much spiritual good, and shedding abroad the savour of his most precious name. O that I had strength! I would then pray earnestly that I might go and do likewise."—"I write as a poor prisoner, who lately expected to have the sentence of death executed. May I never forget how much I shall want an assured faith in the all-glorious Redeemer when the awful change approaches. The faithfulness, the goodness, the unsearchable riches of Christ, apprehended by a sweetly assured, soul-reviving faith—these are our sovereign support under all troubles, and our most effectual preservative from all temptations: we believe, blessed Jesus! help our unbelief."—"You may have heard of my late dangerous sickness. Indeed, I was sick nigh unto death. Little did I think of writing to my friends, or of being written to any more in the land of the living. O that I may devote the life that has been prolonged, devote it wholly to the God of my health and my salvation."—"If my health be inquired after, it is irreparably decayed, my constitution is more and more enervated; indeed, I am become like a broken vessel; my spirits are at so low an ebb, and animal nature so relaxed, as sorely to tempt me to envy others, and to be dis-

contented with the Divine disposals. Will you sometimes beseech the Father of everlasting compassions to remove from me these afflictive evils, and not to forsake a poor sinner when his strength faileth; but though my flesh and my heart fail, my flesh under incurable languors, and my heart through manifold corruptions; yet that the blessed Jesus may be the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."

At another time he writes: "I had a very restless night, torn almost to pieces by my cough. Strange! that these flimsy vessels will bear such violent strainings, that none of them will burst, and let the battered soul slip away to her eternal rest in Christ."—"I am this day a prisoner in my chamber, and write in much pain. Blessed be God for that world where all tears will be wiped away from our eyes, and there will be no more pain! and blessed be God for a Saviour, who is the way to these happy mansions, and the door of admission into them. O that every thing may lead my dear friend and me more and more to Christ Jesus! in him alone peace, and rest, and true joy, are to be found."—"I wish I could gratify your benevolent temper in giving a comfortable account of my health; but nothing administered for its succour and restoration succeeds. I hope to meet you ere long amidst the innumerable company of angels, no more to complain, 'My head, my head!' no more say, 'I am sick.'—"The grasshopper is a burden to me, every blast blows me down, or my continual indisposition and inconceivable languors pierce through me. I now hang a swelled face over my paper, occasioned only by taking the air yesterday in my chair, and finding a sharper atmosphere than for many weeks I had been accustomed to. Pray

for me, dear Sir, that, established in Christ, and strong in his faith, I may be looking for and hastening unto, the day of God, when this poor enervated, crazy body will (to the everlasting praise of free grace,) be made like unto Christ's glorious body."

During his illness he wrote—"I have little ability to read: my chief reading all the preceding winter, (June, 1757,) has been confined to some choice portions of Scripture; and as to writing, invention stagnates, and my hand is enervated. I fear I shall not be enabled to conduct Theron in the paths of holiness, and transmit Aspasio to the realms of glory."* During this weakness for public service, he was encouraged by his good friend Mr. Whitefield, who said, "Fear not your weak body; we are immortal till our work be done. My continual vomitings almost kill me, and yet the pulpit is my cure. I speak this to encourage you."

He enlarges in narrating his experience under some seasons of bodily weakness and distress. The first was in 1747, when he was visited with such a severe illness, as to apprehend nothing but death was before him. On this occasion he writes: "My health is continually upon the decline, and the springs of life are all relaxing; medicine is baffled. Dr. Stonehouse, who is a dear friend to his patient, and a lover of the Lord Jesus, pities, but cannot succour. With this blessing, however, together with a multitude of others, the Divine goodness vouchsafes to gild the gloom of decaying nature, so that I am racked with no pain, and enjoy the free undisturbed use of my reason. Now I apprehend myself near the close of life, and stand, as it were, upon the brink of the grave, with eternity

* Referring to his design of writing another volume on Gospel Holiness.

full in my view. Perhaps you will be willing to know my sentiments of things, in this awful situation; at such a juncture, the mind is most unprejudiced, and the judgment not so liable to be dazzled by the glitter of worldly objects. I have read of a person, who was often retired and on his knees, and was remarkable for his frequency and fervency in devotion; being asked the reason of this so singular behaviour, he replied, 'Because I know I must die.' I assure you I feel the weight of this answer, I see the wisdom of this procedure, and, was my span to be lengthened, would endeavour always to remember the one, and daily to imitate the other. I think also, we fail in our duty, and thwart our comfort, by studying God's holy word no more. Was I to renew my studies, I would resign the delights of modern wit and eloquence, and devote my attention to the Scriptures of truth; I would sit with much assiduity at my divine Master's feet, and desire to know nothing but Christ, and him crucified. This is wisdom, whose fruits are peace in life, consolation in death, and everlasting salvation after death. This I would seek, this I would explore, through the spacious and delightful fields of the Old and New Testaments. In short, I would adopt the resolution of the apostles, give myself unto prayer, and to the word. With regard to my public ministry, my chief aim should be to beget in my people's minds a deep sense of their depraved, guilty, undone condition, and a clear, believing conviction of the all-sufficiency of Christ, by his blood, his righteousness, his intercession, and his Spirit, to save them to the uttermost. I would always take care to labour for them in my closet as well as in the pulpit, and wrestle in secret supplications, as well as exert myself in

public preaching, for their spiritual and eternal welfare; for unless God take this work into his own hand, what mortal is sufficient for it? Now, perhaps, if you sat at my right hand, you would ask, What is my hope with regard to my future and immortal state? Truly, my hope, my whole hope, is even in the Lord Redeemer. Should the king of terrors threaten, I flee to the wounds of the slaughtered Lamb, as the trembling dove to the clefts of the rock. Should Satan accuse, I plead the Surety of the covenant, who took my guilt upon himself, and bare my sins in his own body on the accursed tree, on purpose that all the nations of the earth might be blessed. Should hell open its jaws, I look up to that gracious Being, who says, ‘Deliver him from going down to the pit, for I have found a ransom.’ Should it be said, No unclean thing can enter heaven, my answer is, ‘The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin. Though my sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow.’ Should it be added, None can sit down at the marriage-supper of the Lamb without a wedding garment; and your righteousnesses, what are they before the pure law and piercing eye of God, but filthy rags? These I renounce, and seek to be found in the Lord my righteousness. It is written in the word that shall judge the world at the last day, ‘By his obedience shall many be made righteous;’ so that Jesus, the dear and adorable Jesus, is all my trust; his merits are my staff, when I pass through the valley of the shadow of death; his merits are my anchor, when I launch into the boundless ocean of eternity. If the God of glory pleases to take notice of any of my mean endeavours to honour his holy name, it will be infinite condescension and grace; but his Son, his righte-

ousness and his sufferings, is all my hope and salvation."

In January, 1758, he writes: "My late illness has brought me so very low, and rendered me so extremely weak, that my hand is scarcely able to execute the dictates of my heart. I do not go out of my room till dinner time, and then it is rather to see my relations eat, than to take refreshment myself. Amidst all the languors of decaying nature, this is the most sovereign support—free justification through Jesus Christ; a comfortable persuasion that he has removed our sins from us, as far as the east is from the west; that he has cast them all into the depths of the sea, and will present us to himself, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing."

A few months before he died, he writes a friend: "Your prayers are blessings I greatly need and greatly beg. Blessed be God for inclining the hearts of so many believers to remember my unworthy name at the throne of grace. I hope you will go on to implore the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in my behalf, as the time of departure approaches. I am just languishing. My excellent friend, a skilful physician, and a sincere lover of Christ, has passed sentence of death on me. He declares that all the medicines in the world cannot restore my decayed constitution. I now look for no other remedy than the blood of Christ and the Spirit of God. I would long for no other blessing, but a thankful resignation to his all-gracious will, and cheerful faith in our Saviour's merit."

HIS LAST SICKNESS AND DYING SAYINGS.

As Mr. Hervey's weakness increased, he evinced the same happy and devotional spirit. He seems to have been blessed, after he knew the grace of God, with a solid sensible assurance of his interest in Jesus; and when the days drew near that he must die, he, to use his own words in the case of others,* "displayed true fortitude, rational tranquillity and well grounded hope, built upon the divine promises, supported by the divine Spirit, rendered steadfast and immovable by a divine propitiation and righteousness. He found that the comforts of religion softened the bed of sickness, and soothed the agonies of dissolution. Though sensible he was bidding a final adieu to time, and just launching out into the abyss of eternity, his God sustained him in the greatest extremity: he overcame the last enemy by the blood of the Lamb. His discourses savoured of heaven, and his hopes were full of immortality." It is to be hoped, on this occasion, that no one who has the least seriousness, or feels any concern for his true happiness, can forbear crying out, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

In his death, and to his last moments, he particularly bore witness of a hope and confidence of eternal life, built on the manifestation of the love of God, in giving his Son for and to the most guilty sinner. This he had abundantly testified in his valuable writings, in his daily conversation, in his disinterested fellowship, and sincere friendship for the truth's sake; and in the last and trying season, he afforded an eminent instance of the support

* Preface to Burnham's Pious Memorials.

which these doctrines, for which he so earnestly contended, could then impart. He was then consoled, not by reflections on his own qualifications and commendable actions, which indeed were many and eminent, but entirely by faith in Jehovah his righteousness, and salvation granted to him in the word of grace. He saw nothing in himself to recommend him to his gracious Redeemer, whether duties, endeavours, or attainments. On the contrary, his soul would have been overwhelmed within him, if he had not had a free Saviour, and free salvation to lay hold upon, as the gift of God to him as a sinful creature. The powerful, lively, effectual application of divine grace to his soul, by the declarations of the gospel, were the ground of his comfort and hope. His death-bed peace was not that of a righteous or innocent man, but of a redeemed sinner; of one who saw himself to be guilty, condemned, and vile beyond all expression, but believed himself complete in Christ.

His dying exercise at different times, we find expressed in the following words:—"Believe me, your letters are far from fatiguing me, even in my greatest weakness; they tell me of Jesus who was crucified, the only cordial for my drooping soul." To his physician he writes: "I have just been reading Gerhard's 'Support under all Afflictions;' and a most excellent book it is. If your medicines have not the desired effect, I must seek relief from him. From him, do I say? from a fellow mortal? O, what are all the consolations that all the creatures in the universe can afford, in comparison of that grand consolation of our condescending Lord's, 'Ye are my friends,' John xv. 14. 'Come and inherit the kingdom prepared for you,' Matt. xxv. 34; 'where the inhabitant shall not say, I am

sick," Isa. xxxiii. 24; 'and where there shall be no more sorrow nor death, neither any more pain,' Rev. xxi. 4."—"I now spend almost my whole time in reading and praying over the Bible. Indeed, indeed, you cannot conceive how the springs of life in me are relaxed and relaxing. 'What thou dost, do quickly,' is for me a proper admonition, as I am so apprehensive of my approaching dissolution. My dear friend, attend to the one thing needful."—"I have no heart to take any medicines; all but Christ is to me unprofitable: blessed be God for pardon and salvation through his blood. Let me prescribe this for my dear friend."*—"My cough is very troublesome, I can get little rest; but my never failing remedy is the love of Christ."† He then adds:

"The gospel bears my spirits up:
A faithful and unchanging God
Lays the foundation of my hope,
In oaths, in promises, in blood."—WATTS.

As he had often conversed with his friends through life on the love of Christ, it still continued his favourite theme. Whenever a friend of Mr. Romaine's, who was much with him, came into his room, he would begin to talk of the love of Christ and of the great things he had done for him, until his breath failed him. As soon as he had recovered himself a little, he would proceed upon the same sweet subject; so that he might have truly applied to himself the words of the prophet, "My mouth shall be telling of thy righteousness and of thy salvation all the day long, for I know no end thereof."

The following passage on this subject was one

* Gen. Col. Let. 195.

† Ibid. 209.

of his favourite Scriptures, Rev. vii. 14, 15: "These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb: therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple." From this, he says he hoped to derive consolation in his dying hours, and his expectation was not disappointed.

The atonement of Jesus was his darling theme after he knew the grace of God in truth; and in the appropriating views of this he solaced himself in his dying hours. By this medium, death and the grave to him, as a redeemed sinner, were divested of all their gloom; a future judgment appeared to be a joyful solemnity; eternity a delightful boundless object of pleasing expectation and desire.

He employed himself much in prayer for himself and his friends: as to these he says, "This, probably, is the last time you will ever hear from me; but I shall not fail to remember you in my intercessions for my friends at the throne of grace; and I humbly beg of God Almighty, that the love of his Son may sweetly constrain you, and that his promises may ever be operative on your mind." To use his own words in the case of others, adhering to and glorying in the cross of Christ, he entered the harbour of eternal rest, not like a shipwrecked mariner, cleaving to some broken plank, and hardly escaping the raging waves, but like some stately vessel, with all her sails expanded, and riding before a prosperous gale.

His last illness was long. It greatly increased, in October, 1758, and grew very formidable in December following; for on the Lord's day, the third of that month, in the evening, after prayer in

his family, he seemed to be arrested by death, so that the united assistance of his sister and servant enabled him with difficulty to get up stairs to his room, whence he never came down. His illness gaining ground every day, he became sensible of his approaching dissolution. He had frequent and violent returns of the cramp, which gave him most acute pain. A hectic cough likewise afflicted him so grievously in the night, that he could not lie in bed till four in the morning, and was often obliged to rise at two, especially as opium, how much soever guarded by other medicines, would not agree with him. On the 15th of that month, he complained much of a pain in his side. The Rev. Mr. Maddock, his curate, being with him on the afternoon of that day, Mr. Hervey spoke to him in strong and pathetic terms of his assurance of faith, and of the great love of God in Christ. He declared that the fear of death was taken from him. "O!" said he, "what has Christ, how much has Christ done for me; and how little have I done for so loving a Saviour! If I preached even once a week, it was at last a burden to me. I have not visited the people of my parish as I ought to have done, and thus have preached from house to house. I have not taken every opportunity of speaking for Christ." These expressions were accompanied with tears, which were too visible not to be observed; and, lest his tears should be misinterpreted, as they had been conversing about his expected end, and of his assurance of happiness, he proceeded thus:—"Do not think I am afraid to die; I assure you I am not; I know what my Saviour hath done for me; I want to be gone, but I wonder and lament to think of the love of Christ in doing so much for me, and how little I have done

for him." In another conversation, discoursing likewise of his approaching dissolution, which he did with the utmost calmness and serenity, and of the little which we know of God's word, he said, "How many precious texts are there, big with the most rich truths of Christ, which we cannot comprehend, which we know nothing of; and of those we do know, how few do we remember! A good textuary is a good divine; and that is the armour, the word of God is the sword. Those texts I must use when that subtle and arch adversary of mankind comes to sift me in my last conflict. Surely I need be well provided with these weapons; I had need have my quiver full of them, to answer Satan with texts out of the word of God: thus did Christ when he was tempted in the wilderness." What Mr. Hervey expected came upon him: "The enemy of souls saw him in great weakness of body, and then made a furious onset against his faith; but the Captain of salvation was with him, and would not give him over into the enemy's hands: his faith was tried, and it came like gold out of the fire."

On the 19th of December, 1758, his pains abated, and he grew drowsy and lethargic. The next day he was visited by Dr. Stonehouse, who declared that, in his opinion, Mr. Hervey could not live above three or four days; upon which the Doctor took occasion to speak of the many consolations through Christ which the true Christian enjoys in the prospect of death, of the emptiness of worldly honours to an immortal soul, and of the unprofitableness of riches to the irreligious man. Mr. Hervey replied, "True, Doctor, true; the only invaluable riches are in heaven. What would it avail me now to be Archbishop of Canterbury?

disease would show no respect to my mitre. 'That prelate not only is very great, but, I am told, has religion really at heart; yet it is godliness, not grandeur, that will avail him hereafter. 'The gospel is offered to me, a poor country parson, the same as to his Grace: Christ makes no difference between us! Why, then, do ministers thus neglect the charge of so kind a Saviour, fawn upon the great, and hunt after worldly preferments with so much eagerness, to the disgrace of our order? 'These are the things, Doctor, and not our poverty or obscurity, which render the clergy so justly contemptible in the eyes of worldlings. No wonder the service of our church (grieved am I to say it!) is become such a lifeless thing, since it is, alas! too generally executed by persons dead to godliness in all their conversation, whose indifference to religion, and worldly minded behaviour, proclaims the little regard they pay to the doctrines of our Lord who bought them.'" When the Doctor was going away, Mr. Hervey, with great tenderness, observed to him, that as not long ago he had a dangerous fall from his horse, and as he had been lately ill, and looked very pale, he hoped he would think on these narrow escapes, so often fatal to others, as a kind of warning from God to him, and remember them as such; adding, "How careful ought we to be to improve those years which remain, at a time of life when but few can remain for us!

About this time, his kind friend Mr. Whitefield sent him the following letter:—"And is my dear friend indeed about to take his last flight? I dare not wish your return into this vale of tears; but our prayers are continually ascending to the Father of our spirits, that you may die in the embraces

of a never failing Jesus, and in all the triumphs of an exalted faith. Farewell, my dear friend, f—a—r—e—well! Yet a little while, and we shall meet,

‘Where sin, and strife, and sorrow cease,
And all is love, and joy, and peace.’

“God comfort your mother, and relations, and thousands, and thousands more, who must bewail your departure.”

Mr. Hervey, the day before he died, went a few steps across the room; but immediately finding his strength failing him, he sunk, rather than fell down, his fall being broken by his sister, who, observing his weakness, ran and caught him; but he fainted away, and was in appearance dead, it being a considerable time before any pulse could be perceived, When he came to himself, Mr. William Hervey said, “We were afraid you were gone;” he answered, “I wish I had;” and well he might wish so, for his strength was quite exhausted, his body extremely emaciated, and his bones so sore, that he could not bear one to touch him, when it was necessary to move him about. Yet, under all his sufferings, he was still praising God for all his mercies; insomuch that he never received a morsel of lemon to moisten his mouth, without thanking God for his bounty and goodness, in creating so many helps and refreshments to a sick and decaying body. But especially did he praise God for endowing him with patience, in which he possessed his soul. Indeed, his patience was eminent: in his long illness he was never known to fret or be uneasy, nor did those about him observe him utter a hasty or angry word.

On the 25th of December, on which he died, in the morning, his brother coming into his room to inquire after his welfare, he said, "I have been thinking of my great ingratitude to my God." Mr. Maddock also paying him his morning visit, Mr. Hervey lifted up his head, and opened his eyes, as he sat in his easy-chair, to see who it was, and said, "Sir, I cannot talk with you." He complained much this day of a great inward conflict which he had, laying his hand on his breast, and saying, "Ah! you know not how great a conflict I have." During this time, he constantly lifted up his eyes towards heaven, with his arms clasped together in a praying form, and said two or three times, "When this great conflict is over, then," but said no more, though it was understood he meant that he should go to rest. Dr. Stonehouse came to him about three hours before he expired; Mr. Hervey spoke affectionately to him of the importance of his everlasting concerns, and entreated him not to be overcharged with the cares of this life, but to attend, amidst the multiplicity of his business, to the one thing needful, adding:

"Which done, the poorest can no wants endure,
And which not done, the richest must be poor."—POPE.

This he said with such an emphasis and significant look, as conveyed the meaning in a manner the most sensible and affecting.

The Doctor, seeing the very great difficulty and pain with which he spoke every word, and finding by his pulse that the pangs of death were then coming on, desired him that he would spare himself, "No," said he, with peculiar ardour, "Doc-

tor, no; you tell me I have but a few, minutes to live? O let me spend them in adoring our great Redeemer!" He then repeated the 26th verse of the 73d Psalm, "My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever;" and he expatiated, in a most delightful manner, on the words of Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 22; "All are yours, whether life or death, things present or things to come," referring his friends to the exposition of Dr. Doddridge. "Here," said he, "here is the treasure of a Christian; death is reckoned among this inventory, and a noble treasure it is! How thankful am I for death, as it is the passage through which I go to the Lord and giver of eternal life; and as it frees me from all the misery which you see me now endure, and which I am willing to endure as long as God thiuks fit; for I know that he will, by and by, in his own good time, dismiss me from the body. These light afflictions are but for a moment, and then comes an eternal weight of glory. O welcome, welcome death! thou mayest well be reckoned among the treasures of the Christian; to live is Christ, and to die is gain." After which, as the Doctor was taking his final leave of him, Mr. Hervey expressed great gratitude for his visits, though it had been long out of the power of medicine to cure him. At this time Mr. Hervey lay for a considerable time without seeming to breathe; the company in the room thought he was gone; Dr. Stonehouse took a looking-glass and placed it before his mouth, and observed he was still living; a little after he revived. Having paused a short time, he, with great serenity and sweetness in his countenance, though the pangs of death were upon him,

being raised a little in his chair, said: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy most holy and comfortable word, for mine eyes have seen thy most precious and comfortable salvation. Here, Doctor, is my cordial; what are all the cordials given to support the dying, in comparison of that which arises from the promises of salvation by Christ? 'This, this supports me!'"

When writing *Aspasio Vindicated*, Mr. Hervey had intimated his earnest wish for himself, that he might die the death of Simeon, and his God gave him the desire of his heart. Jesus made him a conqueror over all the powers of darkness: having endeavoured to rob him of his peace, but in vain, they left him in the Saviour's hand, never more to be tempted, and he watched over him with the tenderest love until he took him home.

About three o'clock, he said, "The conflict is over; now all is done;" after which he scarcely spake any other word intelligibly, except "Precious salvation!" Some years before his death, when he found himself bowed down with the spirit of weakness and infirmity, being afraid lest he should disgrace the gospel in his languishing moments, he earnestly prayed to God, and desired others to unite in the same petition, that he might not then dishonour the cause of Christ. His own and his friends' prayers were heard; for, notwithstanding his lingering weakness and depressed spirits, which at length gave him up into the hands of death, yet he triumphed over all his fears, and over the grand tempter and adversary of souls, and in no common way glorified his God in dying.

During the last hour he said nothing. Meanwhile, it may justly be supposed, though men could

no longer hear the dear name of Jesus, as the salvation of God, reverberating on his feeble dying lips, his meditation on him would be sweet, till in a little he cried, with the ransomed millions about the throne, "Salvation to our God, and the Lamb, for ever and ever." Leaning his head against the side of the easy-chair, without a sigh, or groan, or struggle, or the least emotion, he shut his eyes and departed, betwixt four and five in the afternoon, December 25, 1758, in the forty-fifth year of his age.

To use the words of Mr. Romaine, "'The Lord heard his prayer, 'Now let thy servant depart in peace,' and gave him a gentle dismissal. He died as he lived, in an even and calm composure of mind; death showed that he came to him as a friendly messenger to call him to glory, for he cheerfully obeyed the summons. There was no fear, no terror, but he departed in peace, and in full assurance of faith.'"

When his body was conveyed to the church, it was covered, according to a desire which he had expressed, with the poor's pall; and he was buried under the middle of the communion-table, in the chancel of Weston-Favel, on Friday, the 28th of December, in the presence of a numerous congregation, full of regret for the loss of so excellent a pastor. One who was present, says: "Mr. Maddock (his excellent curate) was in tears; some were wringing their hands, others sobbing, many were silently weeping, but all seemed inwardly and sincerely grieved, as their looks sufficiently testified, being a visible witness of his worth and their sorrow."

Many years after, his only surviving sister placed

a stone over his grave, with the following inscription :

HERE LIE THE REMAINS
OF THE
REV. JAMES HERVEY, A. M.
LATE RECTOR OF THIS PARISH,
THAT VERY PIOUS MAN
AND MUCH ADMIRER AUTHOR,
WHO DIED DEC. 25, 1758,
IN THE 45TH YEAR OF HIS AGE.

Reader, expect no more to make him known,
Vain the fond elegy and figur'd stone;
A name more lasting shall his writings give,
There view display'd his heavenly soul, and live.

THE LIFE

OF THE

REV. AUGUSTUS M. TOPLADY,

VICAR OF BROAD-HEMBURY.



REV. AUGUSTUS M. TOPLADY.

THE REV. AUGUSTUS MONTAGUE TOPLADY was the son of Richard Toplady, a major in the British army, who died at the siege of Carthagená soon after his birth. His mother's maiden name was Catharine Bate. She was sister to the Rev. Mr. Bate, rector of St. Paul's, Deptford. He was born at Farnham, in Surrey, November the 4th, 1740.

He received the first rudiments of his education at Westminster school, where he early evinced peculiar abilities. From that place he accompanied his mother, who became a widow at an early period of his life, in a journey to Ireland, to pursue claims to an estate which she had in that country. Notwithstanding the solitary state in which his mother was left, she anxiously watched over him with the deepest sympathy of affection, and persevered in a plan for his education and future views in life, which were the principal concerns of her maternal solicitude. He was entered a student in Trinity College, Dublin, and took his degree of Bachelor of Arts. Mr. Toplady returned his mother's tender care with the utmost affection. Indeed, so great was the obligation which he always conceived he owed her, that he never mentioned her but in words expressive of affection and gratitude.

As he was improving those natural talents with which he was eminently endowed, it pleased God in his providence, when he was about the age of sixteen, to direct his steps into a barn, at a place called Codymain, in Ireland, where a layman, named Morris, was preaching. The word of God which was then delivered, was fixed upon his conscience, "in demonstration of the Spirit and with power." Let it not rashly be deemed enthusiasm when it is asserted, "That his faith did not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

A few years after the above memorable circumstance, Mr. Toplady reflects upon it in the following words:—"February 29, 1768, at night, after my return from Exeter, my desires were strongly drawn out, and drawn up to God. I could, indeed, say, that I groaned with the groans of love, joy, and peace; but so it was, even with comfortable groans that cannot be uttered. That sweet text, Ephesians ii. 13, "Ye, who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ," was particularly delightful and refreshing to my soul; and the more so, as it reminded me of the days and months that are past, even the day of my sensible espousals to the Bridegroom of the elect. It was from that passage that Mr. Morris preached on the memorable evening of my effectual call by the grace of God, under the ministry of that dear messenger; and under that sermon, I was, I trust, brought nigh by the blood of Christ, in August, 1756.

"Strange that I, who had so long sat under the means of grace in England, should be brought nigh to God in an obscure part of Ireland, amidst a handful of God's people met together in a barn, and under the ministry of one who could hardly

spell his name ! Surely it was the Lord's doing, and is marvellous ! 'The excellency of such power must be of God, and cannot be of man : the regenerating Spirit breathes not only on whom, but likewise when, where, and as he listeth.'

Mr. Toplady early made it appear that he was not afraid of literary labour ; the valuable years of his youth were devoted to useful and honourable studies, rather than to frivolous occupations, such as too often engross the minds of young men at his age. He laid a solid basis for future years. Between the age of fifteen and eighteen, by way of relaxation from his studies, he employed himself in writing little poetic pieces, which were printed at Dublin, in the year 1759. They are by no means deficient in spirit and force : some of the verses are truly poetical, and many of the thoughts new. Amidst the small inaccuracies of these juvenile compositions, there are indubitable marks of genius. 'The ardour of piety and religion, which irradiated the morning of his life, increased in lustre as his years advanced.

Richly replete with a variety of gifts, and divinely instructed into those doctrines requisite for a Christian and a minister, he was ordained on Trinity Sunday, the 6th of June, 1762. He entered upon the ministerial function, not only as a scholar, and as one professing religion, but as an honest man. He was well persuaded, that after the awful declarations made by every candidate for holy orders, the man who can draw back, or palliate, for any sinister purpose, the doctrines he has subscribed, to insinuate himself into the favour of men, to avoid persecution, or for any aggrandizement, must be devoid of every upright principle, and openly prove himself an apostate from the

church, a traitor to the cause he once avowed, and a liar to the Holy Ghost.

Shortly after his initiation into the ministry, he was inducted into the living of Blagdon, in Somersetshire, which was procured by friends, in a manner very usual; but so scrupulous was he when acquainted with the circumstance, that he was not easy until he had resigned it. He then went to Fen-Ottery and Harpford, and in the year 1768 took possession of the vicarage of Broad-Hembury, near Honiton, in Devonshire, which he held until his death. Such were the love and lenity he showed to his people, that the whole produce of the living did not amount to eighty pounds per annum. He was by no means anxious after temporal profits, or desirous of ecclesiastical preferments. It was his pre-eminence to merit the highest, and to be content with the lowest. In this situation he composed the greatest part of his writings.

To bring the reader more intimately acquainted with this excellent character, we shall insert copious extracts from a diary found in his manuscript papers, entitled, "Short memorials of God's gracious dealings, with my soul, in a way of spiritual experience, from December 6, 1767," with this motto, "Bethel visits ought to be remembered."

Sunday, Dec. 6, 1767.—In the morning read prayers and preached here at Fen-Ottery, to a very attentive congregation. In the afternoon, the congregation of Harpford was exceedingly numerous; and God enabled me to preach with great enlargement of mind and fervour. The doctrine did indeed seem to descend as the dew, and to be welcome as refreshing showers to the grass. O my Lord, let not my ministry be approved only, or tend to no more than conciliating the esteem and

affections of my people to thy unworthy messenger; but do the work of thy grace upon their hearts: call in thy chosen; seal and edify thy regenerate; and command thy everlasting blessing on their souls! Save me from self-opinion, and from self-seeking; and may they cease from man, and look solely to thee!

Monday 7.—Received a letter from Mr. Luce, and answered it. Gracious God, dispose of the event to which it relates as seemeth best to thee! Choose thou my heritage and my lot! Let it be thy doing, not mine!

This afternoon, I received a letter from my honoured mother, and my chest from London. It is a satisfaction to receive these presents and pledges of an earthly parent's love; but all the relations and all the good things of this life are less than nothing and vanity when compared with the love of Christ, that passeth knowledge, and with one glimpse of thy special favour, O thou gracious Father of spirits.

Thursday 10.—Heard that Mr. Duke has had a relapse into his fever. Pity that so amiable a person in other respects, should want the one thing needful! How much has he suffered since I knew him, by drinking too freely, and how many narrow escapes has he had of his life! Yet, I fear, he goes on still, as an ox to the slaughter. "It hath set him on fire round about, yet he knows it not: it burneth him, yet he lays it not to heart." I bless God, who has enabled me to be faithful to the soul of my friend, and put it into my mind to write him that letter of remonstrance from London, about a twelvemonth ago. But, alas, I have only delivered my own soul! Neither experience of present evils, nor the remonstrances of friends,

will or can have any true effect on a sinner's heart, except thou, O Almighty Spirit, vouchsafe to reveal the arm of thy grace, and quicken the dead in sin, by the effectual working of thy glorious power. As overseer of this parish, I went down in the morning to view two of the poor-houses, and see what repairs they want. Lord, what am I, that thou hast east my lot in fairer ground, and given me a more goodly heritage! Surely, in a way of providence, no less than in a way of grace, thou hast made me to differ; and I have nothing which I did not receive from thee.

In the evening, wrote to my mother. Some particulars in her last letters to me, obliged me, in my answer, to make the following observations, among others:—"God has fulfilled his promises to me, so often, and so many ways, that I think, if we could not trust his faithfulness and power, we should be doubly inexcusable. That he works by means, is certain; and I hope to try all that he puts into my hands. In the meanwhile, let us cast our care on him, and remember, that he that believeth shall not make haste. There is one thing that pleases me much about Broad-Hembury, and makes me hope for a blessing on the event; namely, that it was not, from first to last, of my own seeking: and every door, without any application of mine, has hitherto flown open, and all seems to point that way. As a good man somewhere says, 'A believer never yet carved for himself, but he cut his own fingers.' The all-wise God, whose never failing providence ordereth every event, usually makes what we set our hearts upon unsatisfactory, and sweetens what we feared; bringing real evil out of seeming good, and real good out of seeming evil, to show us what short-sighted crea-

tures we are, and to teach us to live by faith upon his blessed self. If I should really exchange my present living, for Broad-Hembury, it will, I believe, be soon after Christmas. In the meanwhile, add your prayers, that God himself would be pleased to choose my heritage and fix my lot; command his gracious blessing on the event; turn the balance, as seemeth good in his sight, and make it entirely his own doing, not mine. Do not let your tenderness for me get the better of your confidence in God: a fault, I fear, too common, even with believing parents. Poor Mr. D. is relapsed, and his life is despaired of. Alas! what is wealth, with its usual attendants, the lust of the eye and the pride of life, when death stares us in the face! An interest in the covenant of grace is of more value than all the worlds God hath made. Riches profit not in the day of wrath; but righteousness, even the obedience, blood and intercession of Christ, delivereth from the sting of temporal, and from the very possibility of suffering eternal death. In him may we be found, living and dying!"

In my chamber, before I went to bed, was much comforted while singing praise to the great Three-One, the author of all the blessings I enjoy, and of all I hope for. I can testify, by sweet and repeated experience, that singing is an ordinance of God and a means of grace. Lord, fit my soul to bear a part in that song for ever new, which the elect angels, and saints made perfect in glory, are now singing before the throne and before the Lamb!

Saturday, 12.—In the evening read bishop Newton on the Prophecies. At night, was earnest with God in private prayer, for a blessing on my to-morrow's ministrations, and received an answer

of peace. Lord, evermore increase my mental dependence on thy Holy Spirit. I am less than nothing, if less can be; and, oh, I am worse than nothing, for I am a vile sinner! But thou art infinitely gracious, and all power is thine.

Sunday, 13.—The Lord was with me both parts of the day. Water, O God, the souls that heard; and the seed of thy word, sown in weakness, do thou raise in power.

Monday, 14.—This morning, one William Towning, about nineteen years old, was brought here before Mr. Penny, for breaking open and robbing farmer Endicott's house yesterday afternoon, in time of service, while the family were at church. My honest parishioner, it seems, just before he went out, stepped back into his room, he knew not why, and put away a considerable sum of money into a more secret place than where it had lain for some time past, by which means he was only robbed of little more than thirty shillings in money. How evidently providential! Just before the unhappy young man was going off, from Mr. Penny's, for Exeter jail, his father, who had heard of his son's situation but an hour or two before, came up to the house with a look that too plainly declared the agonies of his heart. Unable to face his parent, the young man burst into tears, and retired into the orchard, whither his guard and his father followed him. Lord, if it be consistent with the counsel of thy will, be the comforter and the salvation of this sinner and his afflicted family. Bad as he is, thy grace can melt him down. By nature I am as vile as he: yet I am, I trust, a monument of mercy, and a trophy of thy redeeming power. Blessed be the Lord, my new creator! Blessed be the Lord, my faithful keeper!

Before I came out of my chamber, to-day, I was too hasty and short in private prayer. My conscience told me so at the time; and yet, such was my ingratitude and my folly, that I nevertheless restrained prayer before God. In the course of the day, I had great reason to repent of my first sin, by being permitted to fall into another. It is just, O Lord, that thou shouldst withdraw thy presence from one who waited so carelessly on thee. May I never more, on any pretext whatever, rob thee (or rather deprive my own soul) of thy due worship; but make all things else give way to communion with thee!

The Lord, however, was pleased, in a few hours, sensibly to heal my backslidings, and open the intercourse of love between himself and me. I never so feelingly wonder at my own depravity, nor so deeply abhor myself, as when the fire of divine love warms my heart, and the out-pourings of God's Spirit enliven my soul. Surely the knowledge of salvation is the most powerful incentive to repentance; and not only the most prevailing, but an absolutely irresistible motive to universal holiness!

Sunday, 20.—Was indisposed the former part of the day. Read prayers and preached in the morning, but languidly. In the afternoon God renewed my strength, and I read prayers and preached at Harpford, with much freedom of soul, to an exceedingly large congregation. Oh the difference, the inexpressible difference, between enjoying God's presence, and pining in his absence! 'This day my soul has been like a chariot without wheels, and afterwards mounted as on eagles' wings. Blessed be God for tempering distress with joy! too much of the former might weigh me quite down; too much of the latter might exalt me above measure.

It is wisely and kindly done, O God, to give me a taste of both.

Tuesday, 22.—All day within. The former part of it, I was considerably out of order, and experienced something of what it is to have a body without health, and a soul without comfort. But, while I was musing, the fire kindled, and the light of God's countenance shone within. I found a particular blessing, in reading Mr. Mayo's sermon (Morning Exercises, vol. iv. Serm. iv.) on our "deliverance by Christ from the fear of death," Heb. ii. 15. Several things, in that choice discourse, struck me much; among the rest the observations that follow; "The apostle says, (1 Thess. iv. 14.) that Jesus died, but that the saints sleep in him; the reason why the phrase is varied is, because he sustained death with all its terrors, that so it might become a calm and quiet sleep to the saints." "Satan desired to have Peter, that he might sift him as wheat; and with what did he sift and shake him! Why, it was with the fear of death. Peter was afraid they would deal with him as they were dealing with his master. It was his slavish fear of death that made him deny Christ; but anon, he recovered himself, and got above this fear: how came this about? It was by means of faith. Christ had prayed for him, that his faith should not fail. It may be said of those, who are fearful of death, that they are of little faith."—"It is usual with God to give his people some clusters of the grapes of Canaan, here in the wilderness; to give them some drops of that new wine, which they shall drink in the kingdom of their Father. This sets them a longing to have their fill thereof; even as the Gauls, when they had tasted the wines of Italy, were not satisfied to have

those wines brought to them, but would go to possess the land where the vines grew."

In the afternoon, my indisposition was, in great measure, removed. Surely the shedding abroad of divine love in the heart, and a good hope through grace, frequently conduce as much to the health of the body as to health of soul. This is not the first time I have found it so.

Thursday, 24.—My faith was weak, and my comfort small, this whole day, especially in the evening. Yet, this is my rock of dependence, that the foundation of the Lord standeth sure; his love is unchangeable; his purpose according to election cannot be overthrown; his covenant is from everlasting to everlasting; and he girdeth me when I know it not.

Friday, 25.—Read prayers, preached, and administered the Holy sacrament here at Fen-Ottery, in the morning. Farmer 'T——e, whom I happened to meet at Miktam, no longer ago than last Wednesday evening, so drunk that he could hardly sit on his horse, presented himself at the Lord's table, with the rest of the communicants; but I passed him by, not daring to administer the symbols of my Saviour's body and blood to one who had lately crucified him afresh, and had given no proof of repentance. He appeared surprised and abashed. Lord, make this denial of the outward visible sign, a means of inward and spiritual grace to his soul!

I would observe that I have, through the blessing of God, been perfectly well through this whole day, both as to health, strength, and spirits; and gone through my church duties, with the utmost ease, freedom, and pleasure, yet I have experienced nothing of that spiritual comfort and joy, which I

sometimes do. A demonstration this, that they are prodigiously wide of the mark, who think that what believers know to be the joys of the Holy Ghost, are, in fact, no other than certain pleasing sensations, arising from a brisk circulation of the blood, and a lively flow of the animal spirits. In this light, the consolations of God are considered by those who never experienced them. But if what the regenerate declare to be the sweetness of divine fellowship, is, in reality, no more than what the cold formalist imagines, it would follow, that every person, when in full health and spirits, actually enjoys that inward complacency and sweetness. But this is very far from being the case. I myself am a witness, that spiritual comforts are sometimes highest, when bodily health, strength, and spirits are at the lowest; and when bodily health, strength, and spirits are at the highest, spiritual comforts are sometimes at the lowest; nay, clear gone, and totally absent. Whence I conclude, that the sensible effusion of divine love in the soul, is superior to, independent of, and distinct from, bodily health, strength and spirits. These may be where that is not, and the reverse.

At night, in my chamber, God was with me in my private waiting upon him; and I could indeed say, from a heart-felt sense of his love, that it is good for me to draw nigh unto the Lord. Thy visitation, sweet Jesus, is the life and joy of my spirit.

Sunday. 27.—In the morning read prayers and preached at Harpford, to a congregation tolerably large, and very attentive. Afterwards administered the Lord's supper to some who appeared truly devout communicants. It was indeed an ordinance of love to my own soul. I experienced the favour

and presenee of God. I sat under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was pleasant to my taste.

In the afternoon read prayers and preached with great liberty and enlargement of mind, here at Fen-Ottery. My subject was Acts xiii. 39. The sermon itself, exeepting a few additions here and there, was what I had formerly written in Ireland, in the year 1760, a little before I quitted college. I can never be sufficiently thankful, that my religious principles were all fixed, long before I entered into orders. Through the good hand of my God upon me, I set out in the ministry with clear gospel-light from the first; a blessing not vouchsafed to every one. Many an evangelieal minister has found himself obliged to retract and unsay what he had taught before in the days of his ignorance. Lord, how is it that I have been so signally favoured of thee! O keep me to the end, steadfast in thy truths. Let me but go on experimentally and sensibly to know thee, and then it will be absolutely impossible for me to depart from the precious doctrines of grace; my early insight into which, I look upon as one of the distinguishing blessings of my life.

In the evening, received a letter from Mr. Andrew Laeam, of London; wherein he gives me this account of his late sister, Mrs. Carter, who died last month: "She had, for some time, left the Fountain of living waters. I had two different conferences with her during her illness. I assured her that I did not come to lord it over her; but, in love to her soul, put the question, how stand matters between God and you? Her attestation was, with sighs and tears, as follows: I am truly sensible that I have run away from God; and it is

my heart's burden. But it is written in God's word, Whoso cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out. I will, therefore, upon his promise, venture to cast my soul, without reserve, upon Jesus Christ; and there I am sure I can never perish. Upon this we went to prayer," &c.

I could not forbear answering my friend's letter, almost as soon as I received it; and, among other things, observed to him as follows:

“The account you give of dear Mrs. Carter's decease, is a ground for hope in Israel concerning her. It is a great and blessed thing, when we are enabled to cast ourselves on the promises. It cannot possibly be done without faith; and he that believeth shall be saved. Adored be the free grace of God which, I trust, healed the backslidings of your sister, and brought her again within the bond of the covenant. His Spirit alone can drive the ploughshare of penitential conviction through a sinner's heart, and give us to mourn at the spiritual sight of Him whom our sins have pierced. The Lord give us to mourn more and more, until we have mourned away our unbelief, our carelessness, and hardness of heart! The soul, I verily believe, is never safer than when, with returning Mary, we stand at the feet of Christ, behind him, weeping. I read lately of a minister, in the last century, whose departing words were, ‘A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.’ Nor can I think such a state to be at all inferior, in point of real safety, to that of a good man who died a few years ago in London, with these triumphant words in his mouth: ‘Now, angels, do your office.’ Of some, it is written, ‘They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them;’ while others of the Lord's people enter the haven

of everlasting life, as it were, with full sails and flying colours: they 'return with singing unto Zion.' But this is our comfort, that of all whom the Father gave to Christ, he will not lose one. However the joy of faith may decline, the grace itself shall never totally fail, having for its security the Father's covenant love, which is from everlasting to everlasting; the blessed Mediator's intercession, which is perpetual and all-prevailing; and the faithfulness of the Holy Ghost, who, when once given, is a fountain of living water, springing up in the believer's heart to life eternal. May he, in all his plenitude of saving grace and heavenly love, descend upon our souls as dew, and make us glad with the light of his countenance! When I consider the goodness of God to me, the chief of sinners, I am astonished at the coldness of my gratitude and the smallness of my love. Yet, little and cold as it is, even that is his gift and the work of his Spirit; an earnest, I cannot doubt, of more and greater. The Lord Jesus increase the spark to a flame, and make the little one become a thousand! My health, after which you are so kind as to inquire, was never better; and, what is greater still, I often experience the peace that passeth all understanding, and the joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. Not that I am always upon the mount. There are seasons in which my Lord is 'as one that hideth himself.' But he only hides himself; he never forsakes the sinner he has loved. And, blessed be his name, he has engaged that the regenerate soul shall never totally forsake him; else there would never be a saint in heaven. I rejoice to hear of Mrs. W's temporal welfare, and pray God to make her, spiritually, such as he would have her to be. She and I have much chaff to be

burnt up—much tin to be consumed; may the blood of the Lamb be upon us both for pardon, and the sacred Spirit be to us as a refining fire for sanctification. If you write to her, do present the captain and her with my Christian respects; and let her know from me, that except she comes to Christ, as a poor sinner, with the halter of self-abasement round her neck, and the empty vessel of faith in her hand, as a condemned criminal who has nothing to plead, and as an insolvent debtor who has nothing to pay, she is stout-hearted and far from righteousness. 'The way to be filled with the fulness of God, is to bring no money in our sack's mouth. If you see my old friend, Mr. I., tell him that he will not be able to find any rest for the sole of his foot, until he returns to the doctrines of grace, and flies back to the ark of God's election.'"

Tuesday, 29.—At night, before I betook myself to rest, I was enabled to act faith very strongly on the promises. It was as if I had held a conversation with God. He assured me of his faithfulness, and I trusted him. It was whispered to my soul, "'Thou shalt find me faithful;" my soul answered, "Lord, I believe it: I take thee at thy word." 'This, I am certain, was more than fancy. It was too sweet, too clear, and too powerful, to be the daughter of imagination. There was a *nescio quid divini*, (something divine,) attended with joy unspeakable, as much superior to all the sensations excited by earthly comforts, as the heavens are higher than the earth. Besides, in my experiences of this kind, when under the immediate light of God's presence within, my soul is, in a great measure, passive, and lies open to the beams of the Sun of righteousness. 'The acts of faith, love,

and spiritual aspiration, are subsequent to, and occasioned by this unutterable reception of divine influence. I bless my God, I know his inward voice, the still small whisper of his good Spirit; and can distinguish it from every other suggestion whatever. Lord, evermore give me this bread to eat, which the world knoweth not of!

Wednesday, 30.—Held my tithe dinner at Harford. The greater part of both parishes attended: they seemed greatly satisfied; and I had as much reason to be satisfied with them. Busy as I was myself in receiving my dues, and numerous as the company was, Mr. Powell, of Ottery, (who made one,) and myself, had several opportunities of conversing on the best subjects, particularly the decrees of God, and the spiritual impotence of man's will.

Before I went to bed, God gave me such a sense of his love as came but little short of full assurance. Who am I, O Lord? The weakest and the vilest of all thy called ones; not only the least of saints, but the chief of sinners. But though a sinner, yet sanctified in part by the Holy Ghost given unto me. I should wrong the work of his grace upon my heart, was I to deny my regeneration; but Lord, I wish for a nearer conformity to thy image. My short-comings and my mis-doings, my unbelief and want of love, would sink me into the nethermost hell, was not Jesus my righteousness and my redemption. There is no sin which I should not commit, was not Jesus, by the power of his Spirit, my sanctification. O, when shall I resemble him quite, and have all the mind that was in him? When I see him face to face, which God will hasten in his time.

Thursday, 31.—All day within, reading. The thought of how many acquaintances I have lost by

death, within the course of this year, dwelt with great weight upon my mind. And yet I am spared! Lord, may it be for good, and not for evil! There are (that I know of,) but two things worth living for:—1. To further the cause of God, and thereby glorify him before the world. 2. To do good to the souls and bodies of men.

Upon a review of the past year, I desire to confess that my unfruitfulness has been exceedingly great; my sins still greater: and God's mercies greater than both. It is now between eleven and twelve at night: nor can I conclude the year more suitably to the present frame of my own mind, than with the following verse from one of my hymns, which expresses both my sense of past, and my humble dependence on divine goodness for future favours:

Kind Author, and ground of my hope,
Thee, thee for my God I avow;
My glad Ebenezer set up,
And own thou hast helped me till now:
I muse on the years that are past,
Wherein my defence thou hast prov'd;
Nor wilt thou abandon at last
A sinner so signally lov'd.

Saturday, January 2, 1768.—In the afternoon, called on William Perry, of Southertown. Our discourse happened to take a serious turn. Among other subjects, we spoke concerning the divinity of the ever-blessed Son of God. I could scarce help smiling, at the same time that I heartily applauded the honest zeal of my well-meaning parishioner:—"Let any man," said he, "but search the Scriptures, and if he does not find that Christ, as a divine person, subsisted not only previous to his birth

of the virgin Mary, but from everlasting, I will lose my head." This brought to my mind that just observation of the late excellent Mr. Hervey, who, speaking of Christ's atonement, says, "Ask any of your serious tenants what ideas arise in their minds, upon a perusal of the forementioned texts? I dare venture that, artless and unimproved as their understandings are, they will not hesitate for an answer. They will neither complain of obscurity, nor ask the assistance of learning, but will immediately discern, in all these passages, a gracious Redeemer suffering in their stead; and by his bitter but expiatory passion, procuring the pardon of their sins. Nay, further, as they are not accustomed to the finesse of criticism, I apprehend they will be at a loss to conceive how it is possible to understand such passages in any other sense."

Sunday, 3.—Read prayers and preached in the morning, here at Fen-Ottery; and in the afternoon, at Harpford, to a very large congregation, considering the quantity of snow that lies on the ground, and the intenseness of the frost, which render it almost equally unsafe to walk or ride. I opened the ministrations of this year with that grateful acknowledgment of the apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 10, "By the grace of God I am what I am:" which was my thesis both parts of the day. My liberty, both of spirit and utterance, was very great in the afternoon. Looking on my watch, I was surprised to find that I had detained my dear people three-quarters of an hour; and yet, when I concluded, they seemed unwilling to rise from their seats, notwithstanding the unusual intenseness of the cold. Lord of hosts, who hast all hearts in thy hand, work in my hearers both to be, to will, and to do, of thy good pleasure!

This dreadfully severe weather continuing, I ordered two more bushels of wheat to be distributed.

Saturday, 9.—'This evening I felt unusual diffidence in myself, about the performance of to-morrow's duty. Free, blessed be God, from fightings without, I yet had fears within. I besought the Lord to manifest his strength in my weakness; and these precious words were returned with unutterable power and sweetness to my soul: "'Trust in the Lord Jehovah, for in him is everlasting strength.'" I was instantly enabled to cast myself, with perfect acquiescence, on the message from Heaven; which, though delivered as an exhortation, is, in effect, a most glorious and comfortable promise. My doubts ceased; my misgivings vanished away; and I was assured that God would certainly give me a supply of sabbath-day strength for a sabbath-day's work.

Sunday, 10.—Found God faithful to his word. Great was my strength, both morning and afternoon, nor less the liveliness of my soul in preaching.

Received a letter from my honoured mother. The same person who brought it, brought me likewise two London newspapers, which I hope to read to-morrow; but dare not on God's day. After evening service, visited and prayed with William May, senior. His cry was, "What shall I do to be saved?" But I could not, on close conversation with him, discover the least sign of evangelical repentance. He neither sees the vileness of his heart, nor knows his need of Christ. Lord, bless what I was enabled to speak, and do that work upon his soul which man cannot! One of the most difficult and discouraging parts of the ministry, I have long found, is visiting the ignorant and unawakened sick. But nothing is too hard for God. He, whose grace wrought on me, is able to work on the sinner I have been with to-day.

Tuesday, 12.—In the afternoon read Dr. Calamy's account of the ejected ministers. What a blow to vital religion, to the protestant interest in general, and to the church of England herself, was the fatal extinguishment of so many burning and shining lights! But they are now where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.

Sunday, 17.—God gave me strength to go through the public duties of the day in a comfortable and becoming manner. In the morning, read prayers and preached here at Fen-Ottery, to a large congregation; and in the afternoon, at Harpford, to an exceedingly numerous one. Between morning and afternoon service read the first Epistle to the Thessalonians in the Greek. In the evening read the Cripplegate Lectures. Though my joy in the Lord has not been great to-day, yet this has been a profitable sabbath to my own soul: O God, make it so to the attentive people who sat under my unworthy ministry!

Friday, 22.—In the morning rode to Exeter, by appointment, to meet Mr. Luce. Bought Cave's *Historia Literaria*, Brooks's *Dispensatory*, and Erskine's *Sermons*, in three volumes. At night, I spent three or four hours reading Erskine's *Sermons*, particularly the following ones: "The rent Vail of the Temple;"—"The Harmony of Divine Attributes;"—"The Believer exalted in imputed Righteousness;"—and, "Faith's Plea upon God's Word and Covenant." The Reading of these sweet discourses was wonderfully blest to my soul. Great was my rejoicing and triumph in Christ. The Lord was with me of a truth, and his gracious visitation revived my spirit. One moment's communion with Christ, one moment's sense of union

with him, one moment's view of interest in him, is ineffable, inestimable !

Saturday, 23.—Continued at Exeter, until the afternoon. Before dinner, Mr. Luce and I made a formal resignation of our respective livings, before Mr. Geare and two other witnesses. Having signed and sealed the instruments of resignation, we left them with Mr. Geare, to be transmitted to the bishop. Prosper thou the work of our hands upon us, yea, prosper thou our handy work, Supreme Disposer of all things ! May thy glorious Majesty, and thy gracious blessing be upon us, for thy mercies' sake in Jesus Christ ! Amen.

After dinner, left Exeter, and returned to Fen-Ottery. The ride was far from a comfortable one. Hail, rain, or snow, almost the whole way.

I think this has been the most remarkable day, in point of weather, I ever knew. Between the time of my rising in the morning and returning home at night, we have had frost and thaw, snow, rain, hail, thunder and lightning, calm, high wind, and sun-shine : a mixture of almost all weathers, from sun-rise to sun-set.

Before I retired to my chamber, I read Erskine's Sermon (and a matchless one it is,) entitled, "The Promising God a Performing God;" and the Lord set the seal of his Spirit on my heart. I was enabled to mix faith with what I read ; and God made it a time of love, joy, peace, and spiritual refreshment to my soul. I could look and pray to him as my covenant God in Jesus Christ, who loved me from everlasting, and will love me without end.

Sunday, 24.—A day of almost perpetual rain. Read prayers and preached, in the morning, at Harpford, and here in the afternoon, to large con-

gregations, considering the weather. God was with me in a way of bodily strength: but I cannot say I had much spiritual communion with him in a way of sensible intercourse. But though my fleece was not watered, I trust the dew of heaven fell around.

Between the morning and afternoon service, I read Erskine's Sermon, entitled, "'The King held in the Galleries:'" not without much comfort and confirmation in Christ.

In the evening farmer Roberts came here to settle his tythe. I told him, I never transacted business on the Lord's day, and desired him to defer paying me till some other time.—At night read Erskine's Sermon, entitled, "'The humble Soul the peculiar Favourite of Heaven.'"

Sunday, 31.—Read prayers and preached in the morning here at Fen-Ottery; and, in the afternoon, to an exceedingly large congregation at Harpford. Between morning and afternoon service, I made some very important additions to my sermon (wrote last Monday) on Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27. In delivering it at Harpford, to-day, God was with me of a truth. His word was eagerly received, and seemed to be deeply felt, by very many. I think I have seldom, if ever, seen such an appearance of usefulness among my Harpford people, since I knew them, as this afternoon.

How sweet is the work of the ministry, when attended with the unction and power of the Holy One! My soul has been very barren, ever since last Lord's day; but this sabbath has been a sabbath indeed.

Spent the evening, both agreeably and profitably, in reading the confession of faith, charge, and sermon, delivered at Bristol last August, at the or-

dination of Mr. Evans, jun. Blessed be God for the advancement of his interest among us, under whatever form. Lord, increase the number of thy faithful witnesses, every where, and in every denomination of protestants!

Monday, February 1.—Before I went to bed this night, the Lord favoured me with some sweet intimations of his love.

Sunday, 7.—In the morning, at Harpford; and here, at Fen-Ottery, in the afternoon, I read prayers and preached to a very full congregation each time; and, I trust, the word was blest to some. My strength and enlargement of soul, especially in the afternoon, were very considerable. Bless the Lord, O my soul; and learn to trust him who is faithfulness itself.—In the evening, read Bunyan's Pilgrim.

Wednesday, 10.—The Lord was very gracious to my soul this afternoon. His Spirit was the Comforter, and Mr. Erskine's two sermons, on "The Rainbow of the Covenant," were the channel through which that comfort was conveyed. Amid my many seasons and long intervals of barrenness and want of joy, God sometimes makes me glad with the light of his countenance: but, alas! I can too often say, with him of old, concerning such sweet seasons, "*rara hora, brevis mora*" (few and short.) Yet I can, through grace, say likewise,

A moment's intercourse with thee
Is worth a year's delay.

Surely, O God, I could not long after thy presence, if I did not know the sweetness of it, and love thee in some measure: and I could not know that, but by the revelation of thy Spirit in my heart;

nor love thee at all, if thou hadst not first loved me—We grieve at the absence of those we love, and of none else: blessed be God for this evidence of true, however weak, grace!

Thursday, 11.—Began to compose a course of family-prayer.* Lord, prosper the work of my hands upon me, and make it useful!

Friday, 12.—A little before bed-time, I darted up an ejaculation, that God would be pleased to strengthen me, and give me faithfulness, in the discharge of my duty toward the parishioners of Broad-Hembury, whither I expect soon to remove. My God gave me this sweet answer immediately, “I will enable thee, and bless thee.” Behold the servant of the Lord; be it unto me, according to thy word!

I desire to remember, with grief and shame, that soon after the above manifestation of God’s favour to my soul, I was tempted, before I could get to sleep, with high thoughts of my own righteousness, both as a man and as a minister. The enemy plied his fiery darts very thick, and came in as a flood; but the Spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard against him. I was enabled (glory to divine grace!) to reject the cursed insinuations as I would hell-fire. Oh, that ever such a wretch as I, should be tempted to think highly of himself! I that am of myself nothing but sin and weakness; I, in whose flesh naturally dwells no good thing; I, who deserve damnation for the best work I ever performed! Lord Jesus, humble me to the dust, yea to the very centre of abasement, in thy presence. Root out and tear up this most poisonous, this most accursed weed, from the unworthiest heart that ever was. Show me my utter nothingness. Keep me

* Published in his Works.

sensible of my sinnership. Sink me down, deeper, and deeper, into penitence and self-abhorrence. Break the Dagon of pride in pieces before the ark of thy merits. Demolish, by the breath of thy Spirit, the walls, the Babel of self-righteousness and self-opinion; level them with the trodden soil, grind them to powder, annihilate them for ever and ever. Grace, grace, be all my experience, and all my cry! Amen. Amen.

Sunday, 14.—In the morning, read prayers and preached here at Fen-Ottery, to a pretty full auditory. In the afternoon, read prayers at Harpford, and preached Mrs. Mary Whaton's funeral sermon, to an exceedingly great congregation indeed. I could not forbear observing, "that God had spared her to a good old age: that she was born in the year 1675, ten years before the death of Charles II. and about fourteen before the coming in of king William III., that she lived in the reign of seven monarchs, and died last Tuesday, aged ninety-three." Great was my fervour and enlargement of soul; nor less to appearance, the attention of them that heard. Nay, they seemed to do more than attend: the word, I verily believe, came with power and weight to their hearts. I never yet saw my church so full (insomuch that there was hardly any standing) and think I seldom, if ever, beheld a people that seemed to relish the gospel better. Neither they nor myself were weary, though I detained them much longer than usual.—Since my intention of changing livings with Mr. Luce has been publicly known, a spirit of great earnestness and life appears to have been poured out on my people. And yet, I trust, I see my way plainly pointed out, and that it is the will of God I should leave them. A wonderful combina-

tion of providential circumstances, leaves me scarcely any room to doubt of my call to Broad-Hembury. Lord, bring me not up thither, unless thy presence goes with me!

Mr. Holmes, of Exeter, came from thence this morning to hear the unworthiest of God's messengers. This gentleman was at my churches, both parts of the day; and, from what conversation I had with him, appears to be one who knows and loves the truth as it is in Jesus.

Wednesday, 17.—In my chamber, this evening, those words, 2 Tim. i. 7: "God hath not given unto us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind," were impressed much upon my heart, and my meditation on them was attended, not only with great peace and sweetness, but with joy in the Holy Ghost. My sense of union and communion with God was very clear: and I was enabled to see myself one of God's regenerate people, by finding within myself, through the riches of grace alone, those three infallible evidences of conversion, which that delightful text lays down. The Spirit of Christ was to me a spirit of power, when he effectually called me to the knowledge of himself in the year 1756, at Codymain, in Ireland, under the ministry of Mr. James Morris: he has been, and is, a spirit of love, in my soul, to all the divine persons; and, as such, the principle of sanctification: and he has been to me a spirit of a sound mind, by leading me into, and confirming me in, the light of gospel truth, in its full harmony and consistency; which I verily believe, for my own part, to be a branch, at least, of that *sophronismos* (which, among other significations, denotes wisdom and instruction,) mentioned by the apostle in that passage; and may not,

I apprehend, be improperly rendered, soundness of judgment. Yet, the *sound mind*, abstracted from the *power* and the *love*, is not, of itself a certain evidence of regeneration: it is the divine power, and the love of God shed abroad in the heart, which render soundness of judgment not only comfortable, but a mark of saving grace. Blessed be God for my experience of all the three!

Sunday 21.—I have great reason to be thankful for the strength and presence of mind, with which I was enabled to go through with my public duties, both parts of the day; and to be humbled in soul, for my want of spiritual liveliness and fervour. Lord, I am and can be alert in thy work no longer than I feel the efficacy of divine attraction: may I, if it please thee, feel it more and more, for the sake of thy rich mercy in Jesus Christ. Amen.

In the evening I was enabled to draw much spiritual improvement from that passage, John xi. 40, "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?" Lord, cause me to do the one, and to see the other!

Tuesday, 23.—Awoke very early this morning, with those words full and deep upon my mind, "I will give unto you the sure mercies of David." I cannot say that I had an immediate sense of covenant-interest in that glorious promise: yet the impression of it was attended with a satisfactory sweetness, and its signification was, as it were, spontaneously opened to me, in a manner too clear and pleasing to express. It seemed to me, and I can find no reason still to think otherwise, that the passage may be literally rendered "the sacred" (that is, the inviolable) "and faithful things of David:" for, why may not the word, which signifies holy, just, and sacred, have, in this connexion, the

signification of inviolable ; and denote the firmness, certainty, and perpetuity of those spiritual blessings, which are given and made over to God's elect, by virtue and in consequence of the Father's covenant of grace made in their behalf with Christ, our antitypical David? 'This, at least, must be granted; that the words, as they lie in the New Testament, will bear the translation I have given: and this translation and sense of them seem exactly to coincide with the original passage, as it stands in the prophet, from whence the apostle quoted it.

Sunday, 28.—'The Lord was with me in the discharge of my ministry both parts of the day; especially in the afternoon at Harpford. O my faithful God, bless the word spoken!

Wednesday, March 2.—In secret prayer this morning, before I left my chamber, the fire of divine love kindled, and the Lord sensibly shone upon my soul. I could not forbear saying, "O why art thou so kind to the chief of sinners?" I was so taken up, and as it were circumfused, with the love of God, and the perception of my union with him, that I could hardly ask for pardon. Thus I walked in the light of his countenance, for, I suppose, two or three minutes; when, alas! evil wanderings intervened, my warmth of joy suddenly subsided, and I was, in great measure, brought down from the mount. Yet the sweetness and peace of this heavenly visit remained, after the blessed visitant was withdrawn. 'Though the sun himself retired from view, yet, if I may so express it, I enjoyed the refraction of his beams. He did not disappear without leaving a blessing behind him; sufficient, I trust, for faith to live upon until I see him again.

| 'Thursday, 3.—Upon a review of this day, in which my mind has been variously exercised, I

have great reason to stand astonished at my own baseness; nor less so at the several instances of mercy, both temporal and spiritual, with which God has favoured me since I awoke this morning. I can, through grace, adopt David's language, and close the evening with his sweet hymn of thanksgiving: "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thy sin, and healeth all thine infirmities; who saveth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies; who satisfies thy mouth with good things," the good things of his providence, and thy heart with the better things of his grace; "making thee young and lusty as an eagle." Psalm ciii.

Tuesday, 8.—Our family dining early to-day, Mr. Harris, of Wellington, and myself took a walk, about two in the afternoon, to the top of Fen-Ottery Hill. Looking round from thence, I observed to him how plainly we could see the two churches, of Harpford and Fen-Ottery, in the vale beneath us. Perceiving, however, a pillar of smoke rising into the air, at a little distance from Harpford tower, I asked my companion, "What he thought it was?" He replied, "I suppose they are burning stubble." Imagining this to be the case, we continued our walk for, I believe, full three hours, round Ailsbear Hill, and other parts of the common. Coming, at last, to Micktam in our circuit, we called on old farmer Francke; and were hardly seated, before he asked us, "Whether we had heard of the fire at Harpford?" adding, that, "according to the best of what his eldest son could discern, it was farmer Endicott's house that was burning." The wind being pretty strong, north-east by east, I knew, that, if it was Endicott's house, or any of the adjoining ones, the vicarage-

house and offices must be in imminent danger. I posted away for Harpford, without delay; and, being got within near view of the village, plainly perceived by the course of the smoke, that the vicarage had actually taken fire. By the time I arrived at the wooden bridge, I met a man coming to acquaint me with what had happened: upon seeing me he saluted me with "Sir, your house is burnt down to the ground." Entering the village, I found it almost literally true. The dwelling-house, the barn, the stable, &c. with the back house rented by John Woodford were, as it were by sympathy, all in flames at once, and more than half consumed. Thomas Wilson's house, and that in which Henry Bishop lately lived, from which latter mine caught fire, were totally destroyed. When I saw the vicarage irrecoverably lost, I returned to Fen-Ottery, and took horse for Exeter; where I arrived between eight and nine in the evening, and put up at Mr. Lathbury's. Being fatigued with my hasty ride, I thought it best to apprise Mr. Gearing, agent for the London Insurance Office, by a note, of what had happened: who, in his answer, desired to see me next morning.

What I chiefly enter down this account in my diary for, is this: namely, as a memento of God's great goodness to me, both in a way of providence and grace. Though I was not certain whether the expense, I mean all above the insurance, of rebuilding the vicarage-house, with its appendages, might not eventually fall on me, notwithstanding my resignation of the living last January 23, by Mr. Luce's probably refusing, in consequence of this misfortune, to complete our projected exchange; yet neither the report, nor the sight of this alarming visitation, made me so much as change countenance, or feel the least dejection.

This could not proceed from nature; for, my nerves are naturally so weak, that, in general, the least discomposing accident oversets me quite, for a time. It was therefore owing to the supporting goodness of God, who made me experience the truth of that promise, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." Surely, we can both do and endure all things, through Christ enabling us. Had any one told me beforehand, "You will see the vicarage all in flames, without the least emotion of mind," I should have thought it impossible. But the strength of God was made perfect in my weakness; and therefore it was that my heart stood fast, believing in the Lord. O may thy grace be ever sufficient for me!

Spent the evening not only in a comfortable, but even in a rejoicing frame of mind; and never rested better afterwards. 'Thou, Lord, canst make the feeble, as David. 'Thus, the 8th of March was a day to be particularly noted, not in my book only, but in my latest remembrance; on account of that wonderful support with which I was favoured: which not only made my feet as hind's feet, and caused me to walk on the high places of Jacob; but which even bore me up, as on eagles' wings, above the reach of grief, fear, and weakness; and, as it were, laid me at rest on the bosom of Christ, and within the arms of God.

Wednesday, 9.—Spent about an hour and a half with good Mr. Holmes, whom I found in great distress of mind, on account of his only surviving son being given over in a fever. During our interview, God so opened my mouth, and so enlarged my heart, that, I trust, both my friend and myself found our spiritual strength renewed, and were sensibly and powerfully comforted from above. In the evening returned to Fen-Ottery.

Thursday, 10.—Drinking tea, this afternoon, at farmer Carter's, I had an opportunity of seeing more leisurely, the devastation at Harpford. The whole vicarage is one large mass of ruins.

Sunday, 20.—In the morning, read prayers and preached at Harpford, to a very full congregation: but without any ray of sweetness or enlargement; at least, to myself. Between morning and afternoon service, I was much dejected and bowed down in spirit. I was so far left to the doubtings and evil surmisings of my own unbelieving heart, as even to dread the remaining public duties that lay before me. But the glorious Lord was better to me than my fears, and graciously disappointed my ungracious misgivings: for, in the afternoon, he was with me, both in a way of strength, and in a way of consolation. I read prayers and preached here at Fen-Ottery, with great freedom, and considerable liveliness, to a crowded church.

About six in the evening, being alone in my chamber, I was still more sensibly led forth beside the waters of comfort. I tasted some sweet droppings of the honeycomb, and could say, "My Lord, and my God!" The embers were blown aside, by the breath of the Holy Spirit; the veil of unbelief was rent; and the shadows fled away. Light sprung up, and the fire kindled; even the light of God's countenance, and the fire of his love. Yet my comforts did not amount to the full triumph and ecstatic bliss I have sometimes experienced; but were gentle, peaceful, and serene: attended with a mild, refreshing, lenient warmth; which melted me into conscious nothingness before God, and made me feel him and rest upon him as my all in all. The very state this in which, if it be his will, I could wish both to live and die: for I look upon such a placid reception of his gently

pervading influence, where all is soft, and sweet, and still, to be the most desirable frame of soul on this side heaven. But I desire to leave all to the disposal of Him who best knows how to deal with his militant people; and who will be sure to lead them to heaven by the right way, and me among the rest.

Monday, 21.—Between ten and eleven at night, in my chamber, a little before I betook myself to rest, the Lord favoured me with some gracious outgoings of affection toward himself. My meditation of him, and communion with him, were sweet; and the intimations of his love to me, drew forth my love to him. The cherishing south-wind of his loving Spirit breathed upon the garden of my soul, and the spices thereof flowed out. I could say, and still can, “Whom have I in heaven, but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of thee. Come, O my beloved, into thy garden, and eat thy pleasant fruits!” Thus, though affected ever since the afternoon with a slight headache, my bodily indisposition was more than compensated with the peace that passeth all understanding; and I could rejoice in the sense of union with Christ, my exalted Head; a head, that is never out of order.

Thursday, 24.—In the afternoon, the Lord gave me this word of comfort, “I have put away thy sin.” It came with power, and I was enabled to believe the testimony of the Holy Spirit. Towards evening, I was in a very comfortable frame of soul, while making some considerable additions to my sermon on John ii. 19. How greatly do these occasional visits from above, cheer and strengthen a sinner on his way to Zion! Surely, there is a river, and not only the streams, but even a few drops of it, make glad the city of God.

Friday, 25.—'This afternoon and evening, but especially at night, the Lord has been very gracious to my soul. I could see myself loved with an everlasting love, and clothed with Christ's everlasting righteousness. My peace flowed, as a river; and I found the comforts of the Holy Spirit to be neither few nor small. My sense of justification was unclouded, as when the clear shining of the sun giveth light. My beloved is mine, and I am his. Under these sweet, unutterable manifestations, I have scarcely any thing to pray for: supplication is swallowed up in wonder, love, and praise: Jesus smiles, and more than a ray of heaven is shed upon my soul. "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." My harp is taken down from the willows, and I can sing the Lord's song in a strange land.

Touch'd by the finger of thy love,
Sweet melody of praise I bring;
Join the enraptur'd choirs above,
And feel the bliss which makes them sing.

Saturday, 26.—A letter from London informs me, that poor old lady Goring is lately turned papist. Surely, it is a debt I owe to God, to truth, to my own conscience, and to the friendship with which that unhappy lady formerly honoured me, to write to her on this sad occasion. Lord, keep me steadfast in the purity of thy blessed gospel, and, if it please thee, recover her from this snare of the devil!

Was indisposed, great part of this day, with the head-ache: but enjoyed, toward evening, a measure

of the peace of God. At night, a little before I went to bed, the Lord was pleased to give me a full assurance of his being with me in a way of grace and strength, and carrying me comfortably through the duties of the ensuing Sabbath. I could no more doubt of his giving me a Sabbath-day's blessing, than if the Sabbath had been passed, and the blessing actually received.

Sunday, 27.—Between eight and nine this morning, the Lord visited my soul with a lively sense of his salvation. My comfort, joy, and triumph, were unutterable for some minutes; and the savour of his precious ointment, thus divinely shed abroad in my heart, abode with me, more or less, through the course of the whole day. In the morning, my congregation here at Fen-Ottery was very full; and I was enabled to read prayers, and to preach, with more inward liberty and consolation of spirit, than I have done for some Sundays back. The gospel ordinances were sweet to my taste, and I experienced that animating promise, “He that watereth, shall be watered also himself.”

In the afternoon, read prayers and preached at Harpford, to a congregation indeed. “Behold the Lamb of God,” was my subject: O Lamb of God, cause me, and those who heard me this day, to behold thee, here, in the light of special faith; and hereafter, in the light of endless glory!

Though I have a violent cold upon me, with a tendency to a sore throat, yet I was carried through my duties, not only with great comfort, but with unusual strength of body and voice. A worse church to speak in, I never knew, than Harpford; yet I am confident, I was well heard by all present; whose number, I apprehend, was at least seven hundred: which, I dare believe, I should not have been, considering my hoarseness to-day, had not

my soul been particularly happy in the Lord. The sense of his presence giveth power to the faint, and makes men act beyond themselves. Under the influence of his Spirit, the meanest believer becomes like the chariots of Amminadib, and goes forth like a giant refreshed with wine: the places of God's worship are each a banqueting-house; and the means of grace are so many mountains of spices.

'Tuesday, 29.—'That sweet text, "This God is our God for ever and ever; he shall be our guide even unto death;" proved a cordial to my soul this morning. Blessed be his name, I could adopt those words of triumph, and still can, in the assurance of faith. I am, through grace, as clearly satisfied of my interest in the blessing they contain, as if they were addressed to me by name.

I remember a delightful paraphrase of this golden passage, written by Mr. Hart; which I cannot help putting down here; and the rather, as it is the very language of my soul at present:

"This God is the God we adore,
Our faithful unchangeable friend;
Whose love is as great as his pow'r;
And neither knows measure nor end.
'Tis Jesus, the first and the last,
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;
We'll praise him, for all that is past,
And trust him, for all that's to come."

In the afternoon, began, and about half finished, a sermon on Phil. ii. 8, which, if the Lord please, I hope to deliver from the pulpit next Friday. 'The Lord has already, while writing it, made it a means of grace to myself; and given me to experience the power of that dying love, which the text and the preceding context so sweetly celebrate. O Lamb of God, slain for me, thy blood is balm, thy presence is bliss, thy smile is heaven! 'Through thy

precious righteousness, sinners and salvation meet together. 'Thou hast knit me to thyself in the bonds of an everlasting covenant, which shall not be forgotten and cannot be annulled. 'Thou hast set me as a seal upon thine arm, and hast set the seal of thy Spirit upon my heart.

April 1.—Good-Friday.—In the morning read prayers, preached, and administered the blessed sacrament at Harpford. Both in the pulpit and at the Lord's table, my joy, consolation, and enlargement of soul were great: and I think I never saw communicants more humble, serious, and devout. God's presence seemed to be manifested among us in a very uncommon manner. In the afternoon read prayers and preached here at Fen-Ottery; and the glorious majesty of the Lord our God was evidently upon speaker and hearers. This has been a Good-Friday indeed to my soul; and I dare believe to the souls of many beside. Lord make the sensible unction of thy Spirit not only to descend upon us, but to abide with us!

Sunday, 3—Easter Sunday.—Rose this morning with such a cold and hoarseness in my voice, that I could hardly speak either audibly or intelligibly. Read prayers, however, if it might be called reading, here at Fen-Ottery, and administered the blessed sacrament: but, knowing it would be in vain to attempt preaching, ordered the clerk to make an apology to the congregation. At the table of the Lord, the Lord of the table was with me of a truth, and made my soul rejoice amid all the weakness of my body. In the afternoon rode to Harpford, where after reading prayers to a very great congregation, as well as I could, which was very badly, I was in some doubt whether I had best attempt to preach or not. Considering, however, that if I found I could not make myself heard, I could but cease;

and grieving at the thought of sending away such a multitude without even endeavouring to break to them the word of life, I went up into the pulpit, and besought the Lord to manifest his strength in my weakness: and he graciously did: I preached three-quarters of an hour, with wonderful strength and unusual enlargement of soul. Awe and attention were visible on every face. I was enabled to exert myself greatly, and to pour out my whole soul in the ministry of the word. The sense of God's presence, together with the sweetness and dignity of the subject I was upon, melted me so, that I think I was never more strongly carried out. Once in particular, I could scarcely refrain from bursting into tears. Hoarse and disagreeable as my voice sounded, yet I am convinced the voice of the Holy Spirit made its way to many hearts. Indeed, all were struck, if there is any judgment to be formed by appearances. My wonder at the ability with which I was endued, and my gratitude to the blessed God, for the comforts that were experienced, will hardly suffer me to desist from saying more of this memorable opportunity. Lord, who would not trust thee? Who would not love thee? The work, O God, was thine; and thine be all the glory! Amen, Amen.

Wednesday, 6. — This afternoon, about two o'clock, I received institution at Exeter, to the living of Broad-Hembury. While on my knees, as the chancellor was committing the souls of that parish to my care, my own soul was secretly lifted up to God for a blessing; which I humbly trust will be given, for his mercy's sake in Jesus Christ.

Immediately after I was instituted to Broad-Hembury, Mr. Luce was instituted to Harpford.

Thursday, 7.—That gracious promise was given me to-day, "I will inform thee and teach thee in

the way wherein thou shalt go; and I will guide thee with mine eye." I had been previously much dejected in spirit, and exercised with various doubts, but that word of comfort came with such power and effect, that I was soon set to rights again.

Friday, 8.—Mr. Luce dining here to-day, we walked in the afternoon to Harpford, where I inducted him into that living. In the course of this day I was favoured with some comfortable glimpses of my heavenly Father's countenance. O that I could ever have a heart warm with love! But it is better to catch fire now and then, than to be always cold. Blessed be the Comforter of God's elect, a live coal from the golden altar which is before the throne, is sometimes dropped into my heart, and then I can sing,

Lov'd of my God, for him again
With love intense I burn :
Chosen of Thee ere time began,
I chose Thee in return.

To have a part and lot in God's salvation is the main thing: but to have the joy of it, is an additional blessing, which makes our way to the kingdom smooth and sweet.

Saturday, 9.—In the evening, while returning from Broad-Hembury, where I dined to-day, and at night, after my return hither to Fen-Ottery, I had the comfort of sweet communion with God, and not only enjoyed that peace which the world cannot give, but was favoured with some delightful assurances of God's everlasting love to me a sinner. I was like what is said of Naphtali, "satisfied with favour:" even with the favour of Him whose name is as ointment poured forth; whom to know is life eternal; and whom to converse with is heaven. 'The Spirit himself bore witness with my spirit, that I

am a child of God, and a joint-heir with Christ. Lord, doubtless thou art my Father: O enable me to love thee as such, and to walk worthy of my heavenly pedigree!

Sunday, 10.—Did duty this day at the churches here, for I suppose the last time. In the morning read prayers and preached at Fen-Ottery; and in the afternoon read prayers and preached at Harpford, to a very great congregation. At the latter church, God did indeed open to me a door both of knowledge and of utterance; insomuch that I could not possibly confine myself to my notes, but was carried out with extraordinary enlargement, readiness, and presence of mind; especially while speaking of the certain perseverance of God's regenerate people, and of the utter impossibility of being justified by works. I did not take any leave of my dear people. Farewell sermons, in my opinion, carry in them such an air of self-importance, that I have long resolved never to preach one again. Let me rather close my ministry in this place with—1. Secretly begging pardon of God to-night for my manifold sins, omissions, and infirmities, both as a man and as a minister.—2. I earnestly intreat my gracious Lord to make me thankful for the innumerable mercies I have experienced since I had the care of these parishes upon me.—3. I pray God to command his efficacious blessing on my weak, sinful, and unworthy labours here; most humbly beseeching him to own the messages of salvation I have delivered from time to time, and to grant that the seed he has enabled me to sow, may be found after many days.—4. I beg him to stay with these that stay, and to go with me when I go from them: that his presence and his blessing may be their portion, my portion, and the portion of those among whom I expect shortly to minister. O thou God

of power and of grace, all hearts are in thy hand, and all events are at thy disposal! Set, O set the seal of thy almighty *fiat* upon each of these petitions! and supply all our need, according to thy riches in glory by Christ Jesus! Amen, Amen.

Tuesday, 12.—At night the Lord gave me to experience some gracious meltings of heart. How sweet are the humiliations of penitential love! I desire no greater bliss than to lie at my heavenly Master's foot-stool, dissolved in wonder, gratitude, and self-abasement.

Friday, 15.—Several words of comfort were this day, at different times, spoken to and sealed upon my heart: particularly these three, "Fear not, I will be with thee."—"Trust me."—"I will uphold thee with the right-hand of my righteousness." At another time these words were powerfully suggested to my soul, "Be joyful in the Lord." To many, all this would appear as the most palpable enthusiasm; and there was a time when I myself should have thought so too. But, blessed be God the Comforter, I know what it is to enjoy some degree of communion with the Father, and the Son by him. And exclusive of this inward *elenchos*, (proof) which is to myself equivalent, in point of mental satisfaction, to ten thousand demonstrations, my experiences of this kind, considered even in the most rational view, cannot, I am well persuaded, be justly counted enthusiastic, or the offspring of a heated imagination: for—1. It is attended with such a powerful sweetness, and such commanding weight, such satisfactory clearness, and such a perfect consistency with the promises of Scripture, as leave me no cause to doubt of its being indeed the voice of God to my soul.—2. My mind, on these occasions, is as absolutely passive, as my body can at any time be on hearing any person speak with

whom I converse.—3. I argue from events. I can, to the best of my remembrance and belief, truly say, that I never yet have had one promise or assurance, concerning temporal things, impressed on me beforehand in a way of communion with God, which the event did not realize: I never, that I know of, knew it fail in any one single instance. I do not say, that a particular assurance, concerning any particular futurity, is always given me beforehand; far from it: but when it has, two unisons never harmonized more exactly than my assurance and the subsequent providence. And, if this has hitherto been the case with me in temporal concerns and matters of providence, why should similar indulgences from above, respecting spiritual things and matters of grace, be treated as fanciful?

At night, in my chamber, the Lord gave me several solid assurances of his future providential goodness to me. I was enabled to know the voice of Him that spake within, and to cast the anchor of faith on what he said. My complacency and satisfaction of soul were equally comfortable and utterable. O my God, that which thou hast promised, thou art able also to perform.

Sunday, 17.—In the morning read prayers and preached at Broad-Hembury to a large congregation. I opened (if I may so speak) my spiritual commission by discoursing from those words, 2 Cor. iv. 5. “We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.” Great was my reason for gratitude and thankfulness to the gracious Author of all good. I was enabled, both parts of the day, to go through the duties of it with much satisfaction and presence of mind; and the word preached seemed to be relished by many, and to be well received by all.

In the evening returned to Fen-Ottery, where I

read with great comfort and joy in the Holy Ghost, Mr. Hervey's sermon on the "Way of Holiness." In secret prayer too, before I went to bed, the channel of comfortable intercourse was opened between God and my soul. All weakness and all unworthiness as I am, I have, in Christ, both righteousness and strength: and God, through him, is my portion for ever. In his favour is life; and that life is mine.

Saturday, 23.—After dinner rode to Broad-Hembury, where, at night, in my chamber, a little before I went to bed, my soul was harassed in a sad and very unusual manner, and with doubts and fears and unbelief. I was in spiritual darkness, even darkness that might be felt. I do not know that I ever was so much given up to the evil surmisings of my own heart, since I have been in orders. I could hardly act faith at all. Had it not been for fear of exposing myself and disturbing the family, I should have roared for the inquietness of my heart. My heavenly Pilot disappeared; I seemed to have quite lost my hold on the Rock of ages; I sunk in the deep mire, and the waves and storms went over me. Yet, at last, in prayer, I was enabled, I know not how, to throw myself, absolutely and at large on God, at all events, for better and for worse; yet without comfort and almost without hope. I was, in short, almost in a state of despair. My horror and distress were unutterable. And in this condition I remained, until it pleased God to give me some sleep.

Sunday, 24.—When I awoke this morning, I had peace of soul, and a considerable measure of confidence in God. Read prayers and preached with strength of body and enlargement of mind.—After my return from public morning service, my consolations from above were inexpressible. Hea-

vianness did indeed endure for a night; but joy came in the morning. My soul could magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiced in God my Saviour. Read bishop Wilkins's Preacher with great approbation and pleasure, and not without improvement. In the afternoon read prayers and preached to a very large congregation; and God was with me of a truth. My own soul was richly watered, and there seemed to be showers of blessing all around. I never preached so much extempore in my life before. My whole introduction was off-hand: nor did I ever express myself more freely, pertinently, and to my own satisfaction. My text, both parts of the day, Psalm xxxii. 1. Oh what infinite amends has God made me for the distresses of last night! Might I choose for myself, which, however, I am not qualified for, nor yet desirous of doing, I should hardly, I think, care how much God humbled me in private before him, so I might but enjoy his presence and blessing in the discharge of my public duties.

What a day has this been! A Sabbath-day indeed; a day of feasting to my soul; a day of triumph and rejoicing. He brought me into his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. I never was more assisted from above than this afternoon; very seldom so much. Lord, bless the people, as thou hast blessed me!

Here let me leave it on thankful record, for my comfort and support, if it please God, in future times of trial and desertion, that I never was lower in the valley than last night, nor higher on the mount than to-day. The Lord chastened me, but did not give me over unto death: and he never will. He may, indeed, for a small moment, hide his face from me: but with everlasting kindness will he have mercy on me.

Thursday, 5.—My honoured and most dear mother's birth-day. Gracious God, crown her inestimable life with many years to come; and crown each year with additional grace and redoubled happiness! After dinner, removed for good, from Fen-Ottery to Broad-Hembury; where, being arrived, I spent the evening in a comfortable frame of soul, humbly trusting that the God and guide of my life, who fixeth the bounds of our habitations below, will, himself, vouchsafe to be the dwelling-place of my soul here and ever. At night there was some thunder, during which especially, I was favoured with a sweetly awful sense of God's majesty and love. How happy, O Lord, is the soul, which is enabled to wrap itself in thee!

Sunday, 15.—In the morning rode to Sheldon, where I read prayers and preached to a very attentive congregation: a small church, but well filled. After service, returned home to Broad-Hembury; where, in the afternoon, I read prayers and preached to a great auditory; and the Lord was with me in an especial manner. Spent the evening very comfortably and profitably in writing part of a sermon. At night, those words dwelt much upon my mind, and were greatly blessed to me, "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul:" through the influence of his good Spirit, I could see and rejoice in God as my portion indeed.

Sunday, 22.—Whitsunday.—In the morning read prayers, preached, and administered the holy sacrament to thirty-six communicants. In the afternoon read prayers and preached to a very large congregation. I trust the ordinances were blest to some; but as to myself, I can only say, that I went through the duties of the day with strength, ease, and presence of mind. I desire to be thankful for this: yet am grieved that I was not more fervent in

spirit, and higher on the mount of divine love. I could ever wish to be—

“Like the rapt seraph that adores and burns.”

Fain would I mount, fain would I glow,
And loose my cable from below;
But I can only spread my sail,
Thou, thou must breathe th’ auspicious gale.

Friday, 27.—Notwithstanding my aggravated sinfulness and my absolute unworthiness, God gave me, this night, to drink of his consolations, as from a river. “Pardon and sanctification,” was my prayer: “Mercy, pardon and salvation,” was the gracious answer.

Saturday, 28.—This evening I was enabled to rejoice in spirit. God gave me not only a good hope in his grace, but the assurance of faith. Finished a sermon on Rev. ii. 17. I do think, and trust that I can say, that text is verified in me, even me a sinner. Through the blood of the Lamb, I believe that I shall overcome: I am often fed with the hidden manna of communion with God; there are times when I can set to my seal, that the white stone of absolution and justification is mine; and that I have the new name, the privilege of adoption into the invisible family of God: the consciousness of which is attended with such comfort as is only known to them that receive it. To Father, Son and Spirit, be all the glory!

Sunday, 29.—Read prayers and preached, morning and afternoon, to a much larger congregation, both times, than I expected, considering the wetness of the weather. God has watered the earth to-day, with his rain, which has been, for some time, greatly wanted; but the spiritual shower of divine love did not descend upon my soul until I retired to my study, this evening, after family pray-

er. I had then some short, but comfortable intercourse with God. An observation which I met with to-day, in reading Downname's "Christian Warfare," struck me much: speaking of the Holy Spirit as the sealer of the elect, he asks, "How is it possible to receive the seal, without feeling the impression?" O that I might feel it more and more!

June 5. Sunday.—This morning I read prayers and preached to a large congregation; and in the afternoon to a very large one. My God was present with me both times; and, I trust, I have reason to hope that my labour was not in vain in the Lord. Visited and prayed with farmer William Taylor, twice to-day. The first time, particularly, I had great freedom of speech in conversing with him on spiritual matters. He has, probably, not many days to live; and, I would hope, is not without some sense of divine things. Visited also and prayed with Edward Granger, a very ignorant person, and full of what are called good resolutions, if God should restore him again to health. It is a melancholy thing that, in a protestant country, a minister should have so much ignorance to combat with in most of the common people. I thank thee, Holy Father, if I am, in any measure, enlightened into the knowledge of thee; and beseech thee to make me an instrument in thy hand of giving light to others, so far as my little sphere extends. Was, through grace, very comfortable in my own soul, several times this day.

Thursday, 9.—In the morning, visited and prayed with farmer William Taylor. One thing which he said, I took notice of with satisfaction; his words were, "My pains are nothing to my hopes." Dined and drank tea at Grange. At night, after my return from thence, I was happy in the Lord.

I was enabled, from a sense of interest in Christ, to sing those sweet lines,

“Jesus, thou art my righteousness,” &c.

Sunday, 12.—Read prayers and preached morning and afternoon. Might I judge of what others felt, by the comfortable enlargement I experienced myself, both parts of the day, I should trust that the arm of the Lord was revealed. The afternoon audience was very great: and God was with me of a truth. A door of knowledge and of utterance was opened to me: and I humbly hope God opened to himself a door into the hearts of some that heard. I cannot forbear observing, that last night and to-day, the Lord gave me some special assurances of his being with me in the discharge of the public duties of this Sabbath; and his gracious intimations were verified indeed. The promises of man frequently exceed the performance; but God’s performance exceeds even his promises.

Saturday, 18.—All day at home. Wrote several hymns; and while writing that which begins thus: “When faith’s alert, and hope shines clear,” &c. I was, through grace, very comfortable in my soul; so, indeed, I have been the whole day. Read bishop Hopkins’s Works, which were sent me from Exeter yesterday, with much spiritual improvement. From morning until now, that is, until eleven at night, I have enjoyed a continual feast within. Christ has been unspeakably precious to my heart, and the blessed spirit of God has visited me with sweet and reviving manifestations. Temptations of a particular kind beset me more than once; but the Lord lifted up his standard, and I fell not; the gates of hell attacked me, but did not prevail against the grace of God which was with me. Glory be to God on high, who spreads

a table for me in the wilderness, making me to banquet on his love, and who has caused my cup of joy to overflow this day. Yea, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord, and be myself his house for ever.

Sunday 19.—Though somewhat out of order in the morning, God carried me well through the duties of the day. Read prayers and preached twice, as usual. In the afternoon the congregation was very large. This has not been such a rejoicing day to my own soul as yesterday was; but I trust the word preached was not powerless altogether. Yet this, I fear, I can truly say, that my lot has never hitherto been cast among a people so generally ignorant of divine things, and so totally dead to God. I know of but three persons, in all this large and populous parish, on whom I have solid reason to trust a work of saving grace is begun. But this I verily believe, that if God had not some elect souls to call, he would not have sent me hither. When vicar of Harpford, I laboured among that people for a great part of two years, before I could perceive a sensible out-pouring of God's Holy Spirit upon them; and yet, before I left them, God seemed to have owned my ministry in a very great and unexpected manner. Lord, grant, if it please thee, that I may have the same consolation here!

Wednesday, 22.—Calling on Mrs. Hutchins this evening, I found Joan Venn there, from whom I had the comfort of hearing that my unworthy ministry has, in general, been attended with great power to her soul: but, above all, on the 24th of last April, in the afternoon, under that sermon from Psalm xxxii. 1. Lord, carry on thy work in her soul and mine, to the day of Christ!

Friday, 24.—Visited and prayed with Sarah Granger. In the evening, had a very comfortable

interview with old farmer William Taylor, who, though better than I ever expected to see him, is not, in all probability, far from the invisible world. God enabled me to pray with him extempore; and I never yet saw him so affected. If the Lord gives ability, I think to lay aside forms of prayer in my future attendance on the sick. I generally find, that prayer on these occasions, offered up as God gives utterance, is more blest to the souls I attend upon, as well as to my own. Lord, may thy good Spirit, which maketh intercession in thy saints, be ever present with me, to help my infirmities, and teach me to pray as I ought. There are, certainly, particular exigencies and cases, which few, if any prescribed form can reach. With regard to this, and every other part of my duty as a minister, my help standeth in the name of the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth. I only wish that my natural diffidence was less, and my faith greater.

Sunday, 26.—A sabbath of joy and blessing. Was somewhat cast down last night and early this morning, at the prospect of the public duties lying before me, as I have been, for some days past, troubled with a cough, which grows upon me more and more. But God heard my petitions, and was better to me than my expectations. I read prayers and preached in the morning to a large congregation, and in the afternoon to an exceedingly full one, with unusual freedom of utterance and strength of body both times. After morning service visited and prayed with Sarah Granger. In prayer, she was quite melted down, and wept greatly. God gave me both words and matter suitable to her case. In the evening visited and prayed with farmer William Taylor: and on this occasion, too, I was enabled to pray with much liberty of speech and comfort to myself.

Tuesday, 28.—In my way to Grange, where I dined and spent the evening, visited Sarah Granger. I found her surrounded with weeping friends and relatives, and herself little more than alive, in point of bodily strength, but perfectly sensible. My mouth was opened to speak much and pertinently to her case: and the Lord gave me very great freedom, enlargement, and warmth in prayer. I hope it was made a season of blessing both to her and to those who were present, as, through grace, it was to myself. She strongly, and in a most affecting manner, requested me to have an eye over her children when she was dead and gone, and to do what I could in furthering them in the way to the kingdom of God. I assured her that nothing in my power should be wanting, if I lived, which might conduce to their spiritual or temporal welfare.

Friday, July 1.—Drinking tea this afternoon, at Priory, we were surprised with a very unexpected storm of rain, thunder, and lightning. The flashes were so frequent, and so very violent, that Mrs. Sydenham proposed shutting the windows, letting down the curtains, and having candles brought in, which was done accordingly. I dropt an intimation of my readiness to go to prayer: but the hint was not accepted. After about two hours, the weather being fair again, I took that opportunity of returning home to Broad-Hembury. On my way the thunder and lightning were renewed; but there being no rain, I kept on: and, blessed be God's good providence, arrived safe at the vicarage. The Lord preserved me from a slavish fear: but I felt a very desirable awe on my mind, even such as I would always wish to feel on such a commanding occasion. I conversed much with God in mental prayer, and desire to bless his name, that the

awful manifestations of his power were not commissioned either to hurt or destroy. I have heard much louder thunder, but never, I believe, saw such prodigious lightning, except my being more exposed to it than I ever was before, made me think so. Thou, O Lord, commandest the waters; it is the glorious God who maketh the thunder: and, adored be the riches of thy mercy, it was thou who didst bid the lightnings alarm, but prohibit them to strike. O take me and seal me thine for ever!

Sunday, 3.—Early this morning took horse for Fen-Ottery, where, being arrived, I went to captain Penney's. After being with him about half an hour, we walked to church. If I might judge by the tears which some shed, under the word preached, (and, indeed, I myself did with great difficulty refrain from weeping towards the conclusion,) the message of salvation seemed to be attended with power. After dinner, rode to Harpford, where I read prayers and preached to a very great congregation. Though my cough was somewhat troublesome at intervals, I detained my old audience for fifty minutes, and great was my strength of voice and fervour of spirit, nor less their attention.

Upon a retrospective view of this Lord's day, I find abundant reason to adore, admire, and praise the goodness of God. Mr. Luce's being at Plymouth, rendered it necessary for me, as a friend, to assist him, by officiating at his churches: and the Lord has been very gracious to me in my unworthy ministrations. I have had, also, the additional satisfaction of delivering the tidings of peace and salvation to a people of whom I had lately the charge, and whom I affectionately love in the Lord.

Thou God of all grace, command thy omnipotent blessing on what they have heard!

Saturday, 9.—The merciful and gracious Lord was sensibly with me the latter part of to-day. “Awake and sing,” and, presently after, “Arise and shine,” were spoken to my soul, from above, with power and sweetness.

Late at night, God was again pleased to give me some pledge of a Sabbath-day’s blessing to-morrow. Such comfortable and peremptory convictions of God’s future presence and support on a succeeding Sunday, with which I have been so often favoured beforehand, I intend, henceforth, as often as God is pleased to grant them, to distinguish by the name of Saturday-assurances. Assurances they are indeed: so clear, positive, and satisfactory. I never knew them once fail, or deceive my trust. I have often been dejected and fearful, at the approach of a Sabbath on which I was to minister publicly; and God has frequently, not to say generally, been better to me than my unbelieving fears; but, on those happy days (and, blessed be his name, they have, of late especially, been very many) when previous assurances have been given me of his help and presence on the Sunday following, those assurances have always been made good. The Lord has often disappointed my doubts, and the evil surmisings of unbelief; but he never once disappointed my hope, when he has said previously to my soul, “I will be with thee.”

Sunday, 10.—God has made this a comfortable Sabbath indeed. In the morning read prayers and preached to a considerable congregation; and, in the afternoon, to an exceedingly great one: with great readiness, strength, and presence of mind, each time. In the evening, God delivered me out of a grievous temptation, and saved me from falling

by it. Visited and prayed with Sarah Granger. I was heartily glad to find that the Lord has made her sensible of the deceitfulness of her heart. Her fears that she is not sincerely earnest in seeking God, and, to use her own expression, her "longings after the Lord Jesus." are to me favourable signs of her being so. In praying with her, God gave me enlargement of mind, and great freedom of speech. Visited old Mrs. Hutchins, who longs for the assurance of faith, but whose fear of death rather increases than abates: I was enabled to speak a word in season, and trust it was not wholly in vain in the Lord. At night read Polhill's *Treatise*, late the property of the excellent Mr. Pearsall, entitled, "*Precious Faith.*" It is a precious book, and on a precious subject.

Sunday, 17.—In the morning, read prayers and preached; but not with that sensible comfort which I sometimes enjoy. In the afternoon, Mr. Savery was so kind as to read prayers and preach in my stead. My cough was rather troublesome to-day. After evening service, I was much cheered and refreshed in soul, while reading Mr. Erskine's sermon, entitled, "*Faith's Plea on God's Word and Covenant.*"

Sunday, 31.—Read prayers and preached both morning and afternoon, with strength and some liveliness, but with little spiritual joy.

At night, was visited with some tastes of comfort, and with the sweet rays of my heavenly Father's countenance, in reading Erskine's sermons. Read likewise, not without sensible improvement, some part of the acts of the synod of Dort: particularly, the judgment of the British divines, "*Of the Perseverance of Saints.*"

Monday, 8.—I cannot help noting, to my shame, and as a mark of my exceeding depravity, that,

after all the Lord's Sabbath-day's mercies to me yesterday, I was never, that I know of, more cold, lifeless, and wandering, than I was in secret prayer last night, just before going to bed. Pardon, dearest Lord, my want of love! Alas! if I loved thee more, I should serve thee better. During the course of the present day, God gave me some very humbling and instructing views of myself. Abstracted from special efficacious grace, nothingness (or, if any thing, utter sinfulness) may be written on all I have, and am, and do. Blessed be God, that I have some ground to hope myself interested in a better righteousness than my own!

Thursday, 18.—At Exeter, to-day, I spent some time with that excellent Christian, good old Mr. Brewer: and, in the course of our conversation, I experienced much of the divine presence. Among other matters, he mentioned some particulars, spoken in a charge lately given at the ordination of a young dissenting minister, which I put down here, as they are too good to be lost. “I cannot conclude,” said the old ambassador of Christ, “without reminding you, my young brother, of some things that may be of use to you, in the course of your ministry. 1. Preach Christ crucified, and dwell chiefly on the blessings resulting from his righteousness, atonement, and intercession. 2. Avoid all needless controversies in the pulpit; except it be, when your subject necessarily requires it; or when the truths of God are likely to suffer by your silence. 3. When you ascend the pulpit, leave your learning behind you: endeavour to preach more to the hearts of your people than to their heads. 4. Do not affect too much oratory. Seek rather to profit, than to be admired.”

Sunday, 28.—Read prayers and preached both parts of the day, with uncommon strength of body,

and with vast enlargement of soul. Between morning and afternoon service, being in my study, and comfortably engaged in secret prayer, the Lord visited me with a refreshing shower of divine love, so that my soul was like a watered garden. I never felt so intense a desire to be useful to the souls of my people; my heart was expanded, and burnt with zeal for the glory of God, and for the spiritual welfare of my flock. I wished to spend and be spent in the ministry of the word; and had some gracious assurances from on high, that God would make use of me to diffuse his gospel, and call in some of his chosen that are yet unconverted. In the afternoon the congregation was exceedingly great indeed. I was all on fire for God, and the fire, I verily believe, caught from heart to heart. I am astonished when I review the blessings of this Lord's day. That a sinner so vile, so feeble, so ill, and so hell-deserving, should be thus powerfully carried beyond himself, and be enabled to preach with such demonstration of the Spirit. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. Lord, let thy word run and be glorified! Out of weakness I am made strong: to thy name alone be the entire praise! And go on, O go on, to own the counsel of thy unworthiest messenger, and to make the feet of him that sent me sound behind me! Thy mercies to me, both as a man, as a believer, and as a minister, have already been so wonderful, that there is hardly any thing too great for me to hope for at thy hands.

Monday, 29.—This evening, after my return from Grange, God was very gracious to my soul. My meditation of him was sweet, and he gave me songs in the night season. I had sweet melting

views of his special goodness, and of my own utter unworthiness. The united sense of these two keeps the soul in an even balance. I am then happiest as well as safest, when my very exaltations lay me lowest.

Wednesday, 31.—Writing this afternoon to Mrs. Browne, of Bath, I could not help enumerating some of God's chief mercies to me, both in a way of providence and grace since I saw her last. Among other things, I observed as follows: "God has also given me in general, a much greater portion of health and strength than usual; and crowned his other mercies, by enabling me to dispense his gospel, for the most part, with a liveliness and fervour which I have seldom experienced for so long a time together.—I sing, and ought to sing of mercy and loving kindness. I can indeed set up my Ebenezer; erect a monument of thankfulness, and inscribe every separate blessing with David's motto, " 'This hath God done.' May his grace lay me low at his footstool as a Christian, and his almighty Spirit command success on my unworthy labours as a minister! The Lord go on to make you, madam, happy in his love, and an instrument of extensive good to his people below. In the exercise of the grace he has given you, and in the discharge of the duties he has allotted to you, may your joy and peace flourish as the lily, and your comforts cast forth the root as Lebanon. Amid all your bodily complaints, may his strength be perfected in your weakness, and his right hand sustain you, until, by the blood of the atonement, and the faithful guidance of his Spirit, he has brought you to that land of light, and rest, and joy, where the glorified inhabitant shall no more, in any sense whatever, say, I am sick."

Friday, September 2.—Received this morning a

letter from a gospel friend, informing me that Mr. Morris, of the county of Wexford, in Ireland, (whose ministry was, a little turned of twelve years ago, blest to my conversion,) is waxing cold in the work of the Lord. Upon which I thought it a debt due to friendship and to the cause of God, to write him a letter.*

TO MR. MORRIS.

Broad-Hembury, Devon, Sept. 2, 1768.

It is now about eight years since I saw, or heard from my ever dear Mr. Morris. The Lord knows you are near my heart, and often present to my thoughts. God grant that this letter may find my valued friend as well in body, and as lively in soul, as when I saw him last.

I have been in orders between six and seven years, and now write to you from my living. The Spirit of God has kept me steadfast in his glorious truths, and given me much joy and peace in believing. I trust too, that my labours as a minister have been owned from above, to the calling in of some chosen vessels, and to the consolation of others, who were before quickened from their death in trespasses and sins; which I mention to the praise and glory of His grace, who vouchsafes to make use of the meanest, the feeblest, and the unworthiest instrument to accomplish his designs of love towards those he delights to save. Whilst I am writing, the fire kindles in my soul; may it reach your heart, when this letter reaches your hands. I am at present, high on the mount of divine love, and can sing with the church, Isa. lxi. 10. "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord," &c. How is it with you? Are you as zealous for Christ and for souls,

* This letter has been preserved in Mr. Toplady's works, and is here inserted.

as when God made you the means of my conversion, twelve years ago? O that the Lord would rend the heavens and come down, and set you all in a flame for himself! Permit your spiritual son to remind you of the sweet, the memorable days and months that are past. Indeed, and indeed, I love you tenderly, in the bowels of Jesus Christ. How has my heart burnt within me, and how have my tears flowed like water from the smitten rock, when I have heard you preach the unsearchable riches of his grace, blood and righteousness! The word came with power and with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. And is it true, can it be possible, that you should cease from your work of calling sinners to repentance? Do you withdraw your hand from the gospel-plough, after God has made it prosper so long in your hands? I am told so, but I cannot believe it. O man of God, stir up the gift that is in thee; let it not rust and moulder, by lying useless. The Lord hath often spoken to me by your mouth. O that he would now speak to you by my pen! Do, at my request, meet the dear people of Codymain, and who knows, but there may once more be showers of blessings. Blow the trumpet in Zion as heretofore. While life, and health, and strength continue, let your feet stand upon the mountains, and the law of gospel kindness dwell upon your tongue, to the very last: yea, let your lips feed many. Adieu.

I scarcely know how to leave off when I write to any of my brethren in the faith. If even the poor, feeble, mortal saints below love one another so well, no wonder that the love of an infinite God to his own dear elect should be from everlasting to everlasting. Electing, justifying, regenerating, sanctifying, and persevering grace, have been, and are the subjects of my ministry; and I hope will

be to my latest breath. If a messenger of Christ is under the lively experimental influence of these glorious truths, the word of his Master will be as fire in his bones; yea, he will be in pangs, as it were, like a woman in travail, until Christ is formed in the hearts of them that hear. God Almighty pour out such a spirit of fervency on my dear Mr. Morris, and on his

Ever affectionate friend,

AUGUSTUS M. TOPLADY.

Saturday, 24.—Dined at Ottery to-day at Mr. Dare's. Our conversation turned partly on historical, partly on religious subjects. We talked particularly on the nature of regeneration; and I took occasion, among other things, to observe, that the whole process of the new birth seems included in that three-fold conviction, mentioned by our Lord, and declared by him to be the office of the Holy Ghost; namely, 1. Conviction of sin, or of our total depravity by nature and practice; of the impossibility of our being justified by works; of our liableness to the whole curse of the law; and our absolute inability to help, save, or recover ourselves, whether in whole or in part. 2. Conviction of righteousness, that is, of the perfection, necessity, and efficacy of Christ's righteousness, in order to justification before God. 3. Conviction of judgment, or that act of the Holy Spirit on the soul, whereby "the prince of this world is judged;" brought, as it were, to the bar; found guilty of usurpation, and dethroned; from which happy moment, the sinner is brought into sweet subjection to God, his lawful sovereign; sin is weakened as to its dominion, in order to its final extirpation; and the regenerate soul is more and more conformed to the image of God's holiness. So that, I suppose, con-

viction of sin is only another name for evangelical repentance; conviction of righteousness, for true faith in Christ; and conviction of judgment, a periphrasis for sanctification: which three capital graces are the constituents of regeneration. Toward evening returned to Broad-Hembury.

Sunday, 25.—In the morning read prayers and preached; and the power of God appeared to accompany the word spoken. Young Mr. Minifie, in particular, was, I am informed, greatly affected from above. In the afternoon the congregation was by far the greatest I ever yet saw here: the people flocked like doves to the windows; and such an auditory, and that auditory so solemn and attentive, was a most awful affecting sight. I read prayers and preached with a fervour, strength, and liveliness, which only God could give. His word seems to run like fire which none can quench. Lord, pardon my unworthiness, and accomplish the work of thy grace upon the hearts of them that hear, and on the base sinful heart of me, the feeblest and most undeserving of thy messengers!—After evening service Mary Ellis called on me. If ever a soul was truly convinced of sin, I believe she is so. I endeavoured to administer balm to her wounded spirit, by opening up the promises, and unfolding a little of the unsearchable riches of Christ. This morning, as I was going to church, Joan Venn put a paper into my hands. Last Tuesday she gave me an account of God's past dealings with her soul: and I have seldom seen a person, of the truth of whose conversion I had so little cause to doubt. In consequence of our interview that day, she has had some exercises of mind, as I find from this paper, which, omitting what relates to my unworthy self, runs thus:—"I have had very deep thoughts, and very great trouble,

since my last discourse with you. I have looked into my life past; I have ransacked my soul, and called to mind the sinful failings of my youth: and I find it very hard and difficult to make my calling and election sure. I have earnestly desired to leave no corner of my soul unsearched; and I find myself a very grievous and wretched sinner. I have committed grievous sins, very grievous sins, such sins as are not fit to be named before God's saints. I have examined my soul by each particular commandment, and find myself guilty of the breach of all, and that in a high degree. And now, when I look upon the glass of the law, and there see my own vileness, I find God's justice and my own deserts even ready to surprise me and cast me down into the nethermost hell, and that most righteously: but, oh, see the goodness of a gracious God, in that he hath given me a sight of my sins! And I am inclined to think, that, if God did not work with me, this sorrow could not be. O, sir, I cannot but let you know, that sometimes I have some blessed thoughts of God: and oh, how sweet are they to my soul! they are so ravishing, that I cannot possibly declare it; but they are like the morning cloud and early dew, soon gone, and then I am afraid. I have had abundance of trials and temptations in these three years almost; but if I could think that my dear Lord had shed his blood for me, I should not be so much shaken; and, because I cannot apply these things to myself, my heart doth mourn within me. I am greatly afraid of the deceitfulness of my heart, lest that should deceive me. But let the righteous smite me, and it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, and it shall be excellent oil which shall not break my head. O that the Lord Jesus Christ would but sprinkle what I have said, with his precious blood! And, now I have opened my soul to you, I most

humbly beg and desire your advice concerning these weighty matters: for they are matters which concern my never-dying soul. And I have a high esteem for you: but what is my esteem? 'The esteem of a poor worm: of a poor sinful creature. O that the Lord would let me see more and more my own vileness! Now I have declared to you what the Lord, through grace hath revealed to me; though I am unworthy to write to such,' &c.

O that all my parishioners were, not only almost, but altogether such in spirit as this woman! Illiterate she is, and, I believe, chiefly supports herself by spinning: but, when God teaches, souls are taught indeed.

October 2, Sunday, 1768.—In the morning read prayers and preached to a large and affected auditory: afterwards I administered the blessed sacrament. Last Whitsunday, I had but thirty-six communicants: to-day I had the comfort of counting sixty-one. It was a season of spiritual joy and refreshment. Duty is pleasant when God is present. In the afternoon read prayers and preached to a still more crowded church than ever. Great were my strength and joy in the Lord: and the word, I verily trust, was armed with divine power. Mr. Pratt, of Dalwood, in Dorsetshire, with two other gentlemen of the same place, were here both parts of the day. I know not that I ever spent a more comfortable and triumphant Sabbath. How is it, O thou God of love, that thy tender mercies should thus accompany and follow the vilest sinner out of hell! 'That to me, who am less than the least of all saints, this grace should be given, that I should both experience and preach the unsearchable riches of Christ!

It is much to be regretted that this diary was only continued for ten months.

It is well known that Mr. Toplady was engaged in various controversial publications; in this brief account of him, but little need be said on this subject, especially as his works are all before the public.

In the year 1768, six students were expelled the University of Oxford; much investigation relative to the cause took place, and several pamphlets were written on the occasion. It was in some degree the means of reviving an inquiry respecting the Calvinism or Arminianism of the Church of England.

Dr. Nowell peremptorily asserted the Arminianism of the Church of England in answer to *Pietas Oxoniensis*. This called forth the pen of Mr. Toplady, in a treatise published in the year 1769, with the following title: "The Church of England vindicated from the charge of Arminianism, in a letter addressed to Dr. Nowell."

In the same year he published a tract in English, from the Latin of Jerom Zanchius, with this inscription, "The Doctrine of absolute Predestination stated and asserted, with a Preliminary Discourse on the Divine Attributes, accompanied with the Life of Zanchius." This piece was finished by Mr. Toplady when he was about twenty years of age, but it was not announced to the public until nine years after. The translation was undertaken with a view to illustrate the principles of the Reformation, and obviate objections that have been urged, that the doctrine of predestination was but partially received by those eminent men, who had then lately left the church of Rome.

In the year 1771, were published three sermons by Mr. Toplady, preached in his church, at Broad-Hembury, Dec. 25, 1770, two of which were entitled, "Jesus seen of Angels," and the third, "God's Mindfulness of Man."

In the beginning of the year 1774, a religious pamphlet was printed, called the Gospel Magazine; being a new series of a former work under that name, which was continued steadily. From December, 1775, to June, 1776, Mr. Toplady was the editor, which enhanced the sale considerably.

Mr. Toplady had but a very weak and languid body; yet this by no means retarded his intense application to study, which was often prolonged until two or three o'clock in the morning; this, and the cold moist air to which he had been exposed, probably laid the foundation of a consumption, which terminated in his death. He endeavoured to exchange his living for one in a southern part of the island, but could not obtain it. As his strength and health were greatly impaired, he was advised by the faculty to remove to London, which he accordingly did in the year 1775; and, notwithstanding his debilitated frame, he continued to preach a number of sermons in various churches, for the benefit of public charitable institutions.

Having no settled situation in the metropolis to preach in, and many of his friends being desirous of receiving the advantages of his ministry, they procured, by an engagement with the trustees of the French Calvinist Reformed Church, in Orange street, Leicester Fields, their chapel for divine service on Sunday and Wednesday evenings. Mr. Toplady accordingly preached his first sermon there on Sunday, April 11th, 1776, from the 44th of Isaiah, verse the 22d. It was on the same spot that he closed his ministerial labours, which continued for the term of two years and three months. In his addresses from the pulpit in that chapel, he appeared often, as it were, divested of the body, and to be in the participation of the happiness that appertains to the invisible state. It was not the

mechanical process of preaching, regulated by the caprice of the moment: what he delivered he felt, and his feelings proceeded from thoughtfulness, meditation and experience; an experience illuminated by divine knowledge, which continued copiously increasing the nearer he approached his heavenly inheritance.

During the time of his residence at Orange street Chapel, he published, in the year 1776, a collection of Psalms and Hymns, for public and private worship. The compositions are four hundred and nineteen in number.*

The apprehensions entertained for some time past, by those who loved Mr. Toplady, that his health was on the decline, began now to be confirmed. For, on Easter Sunday, the 19th of April, 1778, as he attempted to speak from Isaiah xxvi. 19, "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise," &c., his hoarseness was so violent, that he was obliged, after naming the text, to descend from the pulpit. Yet so ardently abounding was he in the ministry of the word, that when the least abatement in his disorder gave him a little strength, he entered upon his delightful work with as much alacrity of spirit as if he was in a state of convalescence. After preaching, he has been so enfeebled as to create the most exquisite sensibility in the breasts of those who have beheld him. He preached four times after the above Sunday; and, on each occasion, his words were to the congregation, as if he should

* Mr. Montgomery observes, as to Mr. Toplady's own Hymns, "There is a peculiar ethereal spirit, in some of them; whether mourning or rejoicing, praying or praising, the writer seems absorbed in the full triumph of faith; 'and whether in the body or out of the body, caught up into the third heaven,' and beholding unutterable things."

never see them more, until he met them in the kingdom of heaven.

While he was waiting and earnestly desiring a dismissal from the body, and having, as he himself expressed, settled all his concerns respecting both worlds, so as to have nothing to do but die, he received a shaft that was quite unexpected. A report had been propagated, that Mr. Toplady had receded from his former principles, and had a desire to protest against them in the presence of Mr. Wesley. Letters from the country were sent to him, mentioning his recantation, as also some verbal intimations from those who were present when the intelligence was given. When the above transactions were rehearsed to him, it rekindled the dying embers that remained. He acquainted his physician with his intention of going before his congregation again, to make a solemn appeal in reference to his past and present principles. He was informed that it would be dangerous in him to make the attempt, and that probably he might die in the execution of it. He replied, with his usual magnanimity, "A good man once said, he would rather wear out than rust out; and I would rather die in the harness than die in the stall." On Sunday, June 14th, he came from Knightsbridge; and, after a sermon by his assistant, the Rev. Dr. Illingworth, he went up into the pulpit, to the inexpressible surprise of his people, and made a short, but affecting exhortation, from the 2d epistle of Peter, i. 13, 14: "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance, knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me." When mentioning the sensible peace he was a recipient of, and the joy and consolation of the Holy Spirit, which he had

participated of for several months past, and the desirable expectation that, in a few days, he must resign his mortal part to corruption, as a prelude to his seeing the King in his beauty, the effect produced upon his auditory cannot be described. He closed his address, respecting the purport of his coming there, and the substance was printed in a week after, entitled, "The Rev. Mr. Toplady's Dying Avowal of his Religious Sentiments."

We shall now introduce a few extracts from a small narrative, published a short time after his death. Some of his observations and remarks were, by a few persons, who where present, committed to writing, that they might not be effaced from the memory, and for the satisfaction of others.

In conversation with a gentleman of the faculty, not long before his death, Mr. Toplady frequently disclaimed with abhorrence the least dependence on his own righteousness, as any cause of his justification before God, and said, that he rejoiced only in the free, complete, and everlasting salvation of God's elect by Jesus Christ, through the sanctification of the Holy Spirit. We cannot satisfy the reader more than by giving his friend's own relation of the intercourse and conversation. "A remarkable jealousy was apparent in his whole conduct, for fear of receiving any part of that honour which is due to Christ alone. He desired to be nothing, and that Jesus might be all and in all. His feelings were so very tender upon this subject, that I once undesignedly put him almost in an agony, by remarking the great loss which the church of Christ would sustain by his death, at this particular juncture. The utmost distress was immediately visible in his countenance, and he exclaimed to this purpose:—What by my death? No! By my death? No. Jesus Christ is able, and will, by

proper instruments, defend his own truths. And with regard to what little I have been enabled to do in this way, not to me, not to me, but to his own name, and to that only, be the glory.

“Conversing upon the subject of election, he said, ‘That God’s everlasting love to his chosen people; his eternal, particular, most free and immutable choice of them in Christ Jesus, was without the least respect to any work or works of righteousness, wrought or to be wrought, or that ever should be wrought, in them or by them; for God’s election does not depend upon our sanctification, but our sanctification depends upon God’s election and appointment of us to everlasting life.—At another time he was so affected with a sense of God’s everlasting love to his soul, that he could not refrain from bursting into tears.

“‘The more his bodily strength was impaired, the more vigorous, lively, and rejoicing his mind seemed to be. From the whole tenor of his conversation during our interviews, he appeared not merely placid and serene, but he evidently possessed the fullest assurance of the most triumphant faith. He repeatedly told me, that he had not had the least shadow of a doubt, respecting his eternal salvation for nearly two years past. It is no wonder, therefore, that he so earnestly longed to be dissolved and to be with Christ. His soul seemed to be constantly panting heaven-ward; and his desires increased the nearer his dissolution approached. A short time before his death, at his request, I felt his pulse; and he desired to know what I thought of it. I told him, that his heart and arteries evidently beat, almost every day, weaker and weaker. He replied immediately, with the sweetest smile upon his countenance, Why, that is a good sign that my death is fast approaching; and,

blessed be God, I can add, that my heart beats every day stronger and stronger for glory.

“A few days preceding his dissolution, I found him sitting up in his arm chair, and scarcely able to move or speak. I addressed him very softly, and asked if his consolations continued to abound as they had hitherto done. He quickly replied, O my dear sir, it is impossible to describe how good God is to me. Since I have been sitting in this chair this afternoon, (glory be to his name!) I have enjoyed such a season, such sweet communion with God, and such delightful manifestations of his presence with and love to my soul, that it is impossible for words or any language to express them. I have had peace and joy unutterable; and I fear not, but that God’s consolations and support will continue. But he immediately recollected himself, and added, What have I said? God may, to be sure, as a Sovereign, hide his face and his smiles from me; however, I believe he will not; and if he should, yet still will I trust in him: I know I am safe and secure, for his love and his covenant are everlasting.”

To another friend who, in a conversation with him upon the subject of his principles, had asked him whether any doubt remained upon his mind respecting the truth of them; he answered, Doubt, sir, doubt! Pray use not that word, when speaking of me. I cannot endure the term, at least while God continues to shine upon my soul in the gracious manner he does now: not (added he) but that I am sensible, that while in the body, if left of him, I am capable, through the power of temptation, of calling into question every truth of the gospel. But that is so far from being the case, that the comforts and manifestations of his love are so abundant as to render my state and condition the most

desirable in the world. I would not exchange my condition with any one upon earth. And, with respect to my principles, those blessed truths which I have been enabled in my poor measure to maintain, appear to me, more than ever, most gloriously indubitable. My own existence is not, to my apprehension, a greater certainty."

The same friend calling upon him a day or two before his death, he said, with hands clasped, and his eyes lifted up and starting with tears of the most evident joy, O my dear sir, I cannot tell you the comforts I feel in my soul; they are past expression! The consolations of God to such an unworthy wretch are so abundant, that he leaves me nothing to pray for, but a continuance of them. I enjoy a heaven already in my soul. My prayers are all converted into praise. Nevertheless, I do not forget, that I am still in the body, and liable to all those distressing fears which are incident to human nature, when under temptation and without any sensible divine support. But so long as the presence of God continues with me, in the degree I now enjoy it, I cannot but think that such a desponding frame is impossible. All this he spake with an emphasis the most ardent that can be conceived.

Speaking to another particular friend upon the subject of his "dying avowal," he expressed himself thus: "My dear friend, those great and glorious truths, which the Lord, in rich mercy, has given me to believe, and which he has enabled me, though very feebly, to stand forth in the defence of, are not, as those who believe not or oppose them say, dry doctrines, or mere speculative points. No. But, being brought into practical and heart-felt experience, they are the very joy and support of my soul; and the consolations flowing from them, carry

me far above the things of time and sense." Soon afterwards he added, "So far as I know my own heart, I have no desire but to be entirely passive; to live, to die, to be, to do, to suffer, whatever is God's blessed will concerning me; being perfectly satisfied, that as he ever has done, so he ever will do, that which is best concerning me; and that he deals out, in number, weight, and measure, whatever will conduce most to his own glory, and to the good of his people."

Another of his friends, mentioning likewise the report that was spread abroad of his recanting his former principles; he said, with some vehemence and emotion, "I recant my former principles! God forbid that I should be so vile an apostate." To which he presently added, with great apparent humility, "And yet that apostate I should soon be, if I were left to myself."

To the same friend, conversing upon the subject of his sickness, he said: "Sickness is no affliction; pain no curse; death itself no dissolution."

All his conversations, as he approached nearer and nearer to his decease, seemed more and more happy, and heavenly. He frequently called himself the happiest man in the world. "Oh! (said he) how this soul of mine longs to be gone! Like a bird imprisoned in a cage, it longs to take its flight. O that I had wings like a dove, then would I flee away to the realms of bliss, and be at rest for ever! O that some guardian angel might be commissioned, for I long to be absent from this body, and to be with my Lord for ever. Being asked by a friend, if he always enjoyed such manifestations, he answered, I cannot say there are no intermissions; for, if there were not, my consolations would be more and greater than I could possibly bear; but when they abate, they leave

such an abiding sense of God's goodness, and of the certainty of my being fixed upon the eternal rock Christ Jesus, that my soul is still filled with peace and joy.

At another time, and indeed for many days together, he cried out, "Oh what a day of sunshine has this been to me! I have not words to express it. It is unutterable. O my friends, how good is God! almost without interruption his presence has been with me." And then, repeating several passages of Scripture, he added, "What a great thing it is to rejoice in death!" Speaking of Christ, he said, "His love is unutterable!" He was happy in declaring, that the eighth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, from the thirty-third to the end of the six following verses, were the joy and comfort of his soul. Upon that portion of Scripture he often descanted with great delight, and would be frequently ejaculating, "Lord Jesus! why tarriest thou so long!" He sometimes said, "I find as the bottles of heaven empty they are filled again;" meaning, probably, the continual comforts of grace, which he abundantly enjoyed.

When he drew near his end, he said, waking from a slumber: "O what delights! Who can fathom the joys of the third heaven?" And, a little before his departure, he was blessing and praising God for continuing to him his understanding in clearness; but, added he in a rapture, "for what is most of all, his abiding presence, and the shining of his love upon my soul. The sky, says he, is clear; there is no cloud: Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

Within an hour of his death he called his friends and his servant, and asked them if they could give him up: upon their answering in the affirmative, since it pleased the Lord to be so gracious to him,

he replied, "Oh what a blessing it is, you are made willing to give me up into the hands of my dear Redeemer, and to part with me; it will not be long before God takes me; for no mortal man can live (bursting, while he said it, into tears of joy) after the glories which God has manifested to my soul." Soon after this he closed his eyes, and found, as Milton finely expresses it,

————— A death, like sleep,
A gentle wafting to immortal life,

on Tuesday, August the 11th, 1778, in the 38th year of his age.

On Monday, August the 17th, at four o'clock in the afternoon, his remains were brought from Knightsbridge to Tottenham Court Chapel, to be interred. Though the time was kept as private as possible, there were, notwithstanding, several thousands of persons present at the solemnity. It was his particular request that no funeral sermon should be preached; he desired to slip into the tomb unnoticed and unregarded. His soul disdained to borrow posthumous fame. He had no wish to have his memory perpetuated by those little arts and finesses so often practised; he knew that his record was on high, and that his name was written in the Lamb's book of life. He sought for no eulogium while living; and any panegyrics bestowed upon him when his course was run, he knew could be of no service, and that they are often too justly construed to proceed from pride, vanity, and weakness.

The Rev. Rowland Hill, prior to the burial service, could not refrain from innocently trespassing upon the solicitation of his departed friend, by addressing the multitude on the solemn occasion, and embraced the opportunity of affectionately declar-

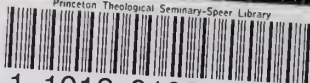
ing the love and veneration he felt for the deceased. The beautiful simplicity of his pathos, and the exquisite sensibility he showed, were more than equivalent to the most studied harangue. The funeral service was read by Dr. Illingworth, and concluded with a suitable hymn. .

Some enemies of Mr. Toplady having raised various false reports as to the state of his mind in his last hours, Sir Richard Hill refuted these slanders: he quotes the two following remarks made by Mr. Toplady not long before his death. 'The first was—"To a person interested in the salvation of Christ, sickness is no disease, pain no affliction, death no dissolution." The other was an answer to Dr. Gifford, in consequence of the doctor's expressing hopes that Mr. Toplady might recover, and be again useful. Mr. Toplady heard what his friend had to say, and then expressed himself nearly in the following words: "I believe God never gave such manifestations of his love to any creature, and suffered him to live."

The following attestation was also given by Andrew Gifford, D. D. British Museum; John Ryland, senior, Northampton; Thomas Evans, Apothecary, Knights-bridge; and Elizabeth Sterling, nurse; with nine other persons:

"We, whose names are underwritten, are willing to testify upon oath, if required, that all the particulars published to the world in the late memoirs, relative to the illness and death of the late Rev. Augustus Montague Toplady, are strictly true; we ourselves having been eye and ear-witnesses of the same."

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